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SOME RECORDS OF CRIME

(BEING THE DIARY OF A YEAR, OFFICIAL AND
PARTICULAR, OF AN OFFICER OF THE
THUGGEE AND DACOITIE POLICE)

BY

GENERAL CHARLES HERVEY, C.B.

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THUGGEE AND DACOITIE IN INDIA)

Ut jugulent homines surgunt de nocte latrones.—HORACE

VOL. I.

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TO
SIR JAMES FITZJAMES STEPHEN, BARONET,
K.C.S.I.,
THE DISTINGUISHED INDIAN LAWGIVER AND ENLIGHTENED JUDGE,
WHO, AS LEGISLATIVE MEMBER OF THE COUNCIL OF THE
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA,
WITH GREAT LEARNING, INFINITE RESEARCH,
AND UNWEARIED LABOUR AND CARE, VERY ABLY CONDUCTED
THE IMPORTANT AND DIFFICULT DUTIES OF THAT
HIGH OFFICE,
AND ADMIRABLY DISCHARGED THEM,
THESE RECORDS OF CRIME, ARE, BY PERMISSION,
RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED BY HIS FRIEND AND ADMIRER
THE AUTHOR.

ABUNDEL,

ST. MARY CHURCH,

TORQUAY,

17th March, 1892.

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AT THE DURBAR.

(CLOSE OF 1886.)

I WOULD introduce my Journal for 1867 with a retrospect of some of the events towards the close of the preceding year as leading up to the general narrative of the diaried period.

I attended, in November, 1866, the Durbar held at Agra by the Governor-General of India. Queenly Agra!—that noble creation of the great Moghul Sovereign from whom it derived its better name of Akhbar-a-bad¹—where the beautiful Táj, lapped by the silvery Jumna, reveals, fairy-like, from the opposite bank, her ethereal loveliness; and the majestic battlements of its renowned citadel, defended by enormous double ramparts of agate-like redstone, and faultless oriels of perforated white marble laved on the river face by the same stream—the royal palace, noble halls of state, and most perfect cupolas uprising from their midst—stand resplendently forth, contrasting with the dull, unrelieved aspect of modern fortresses and of

¹ "The Emperor Akhbar founded here a most magnificent city." (*Abool Fazl*.)

modern architecture, and, like its neighbouring Táj, "far o'erpassing old, and mocking modern skill."

Yet scarcely more magnificent the pomp and splendour of the royal receptions there similarly held by that famed monarch and his immediate successors, than the glow and glitter, the state and courtly ceremony, which attended the same gorgeous, though less tumultuous pageant on the present occasion, even in these more staid times, however *Cromwellian* our Viceroy and individually opposed to such costly displays. For here at the same Imperial city, recalling the great traditions and the proud and pleasant memories of the grandeur and the mightiness of their own monarchs, gathered to do homage through the person of her august Pro-consul to the Majesty of the British Queen who now swayed sovereignty over them, were princes of remote lineage and high-born ancestral descent; chieftains and rulers exercising independent domination over vast domains and martial races; palatines and powerful barons; kings, lords, and lordlings; high ministers of state and lordly nobles—the representatives of the powers and principalities of old time and past rule—now owning and come openly to avow allegiance, whatever any mental reservation, to that distant foreign nation whom ten years previously they, mostly, had thought to depose, and, as some suppose, had nearly done so—and might have, but that "little England rose and stretched her hands"—

"For there were gathered round the white Queen's throne
All loyal hearts of England's chivalry,—

Our soldiers speeding from her sea-girt shores.²
 Not for a throne's sake, but a Queen's, they passed
 Into the storm and battle, and made fast
 Their hearts' true homage on her loyal love."

Grandly encamped after the manner of native potentates, at various distances in the open country in the vicinage of the great plain where were pitched the Viceregal tents standing importantly out afront of the camps of the numerous regiments of European and Native Infantry and Cavalry and batteries of European Artillery that safeguarded them, and variously attended each by his own retinue of gaudily-appareled followers and banner-bearing spearmen, horse and foot, these several chiefs imposingly posited aloft on splendidly draped elephants, or astride, bravely clad, on prancing steed as richly caparisoned, or seated half-recumbent and cross-legged as their manner is, in sumptuous sedan,³ came in a succession of

² "Our sires who caught the spirit of the sea" would have been the correct third line in this quotation from Mr. Rennell Rodd's fine epic on "Raleigh," learnt by heart by some of us here at home, and I would beg that talented gentleman's pardon for substituting it in this place with one more suited to the invoked occasion. May we not expect from that early gifted author a similar poem on the "Indian Mutiny," a great subject not yet handled in verse? But in suggesting this, I am not unmindful of the spirited prize poem on "Lucknow," by Mr. Anthony S. Aglen, or of the "battle revelry" of its contents.

³ Sedans of state, borne aloft on the shoulders of gorgeously clothed bearers, are called *peenus*, the equivalent of our word *pinnace*. I don't know how or why, except for contrast sake, but so it is, that the term is applied alike to a boat and a palankeen; as, may be, a camel also is to a ship, and a cab likened to a gondola! In respect to a camel, indeed, it is curious that the Hindustani word *jaház*, which ordinarily means a boat or a ship, should also signify the tree of a camel saddle!

processions to the great Levee of the day, and welcomed as they approached by British officers specially appointed to the ceremony of meeting them, called Istikbál, were by these, one by one, escorted to the precincts of the Viceregal canopies, dismounting where they were, in the order of arrival, conducted through the avenue formed by the guard of honour of British Infantry drawn up in the carpeted space fronting the reception tent, and by it were saluted at the "Present" as each great man passed on to the inside, the booming of guns to the number conceded to his special sovereign rank, denoting to the outside multitude the dignity of the personage thus announced.

Pompously and with ponderous steps did bejewelled Scindiah stride into the ample durbar tent, and take his appointed seat to the right of the dais on which stood the chair of state intended for the Viceroy.* As consequentially, in their turns, stepped forth the equally bedizened Maharajahs of Jeypore and Jodhpoor, modestly followed anon by the meek-looking and abashed, but equally high-spirited, Begum of Bhopal, the queen whom Lord Canning so eloquently but courteously apostrophized on the occasion of his own great durbar at Jubbulpore, in that memorable speech expressive

* The absence of the Maharajah Holkur was noticeable, but a representative from his court attended. Perhaps jealousy of precedence was the cause of this lapse, Holkur claiming, I believe, equal rank with Scindia. In the case of the Maharajah of Jeypoor, who also claimed at least equal rank with either potentate, the feeling was assuaged by giving His Highness the nearest seat to the left of the Viceroy's state chair, but not, it was officially declared, as "any precedent."—C. H.

of her unswerving loyalty when others had wavered during the Mutiny—"and you, a woman, too!" And then followed in succession all the gathered rulers, whether of Rajpootanah, the Central Indian States, or Bendlekund, the Punjab and other provinces—rajahs, thákoors and high-titled ministers of state—ushered in turn to their appointed places disposed crescentine-wise in the order of precedence on the right half of the canvas chamber, the space to the left of the Viceroy's chair, except the nearest seat specially allotted to the Maharajah of Jeypore, for he claimed equal rank with Scindiah, being occupied by British officers, civil and military, numerously present in full dress and similarly seated in the order of rank, prominent among whom, in their respective upper places, were the Lieutenant-Governors of Bengal, the North-Western Provinces, and the Punjab, the Commander-in-Chief of the army, the members of Council, and the several secretaries of the Government of India.

It was a sight worth coming to behold, these exalted native personages decorously seated with the thoughtful composure of ceremonial silence they knew so well to preserve, and the picturesque grandeur which befitted the occasion, their scimitars laid across their laps, or gracefully poised on the ground by braceleted right hands resting uplifted in various attitudes upon the jewelled hilts thereof, yet, as the close observer might perceive, secretly contemplating each other the while, whether more bravely got up or more jubilant and expectant than

himself, and with inward exclamations, *quasi dicant*, "Ah, yes ; but look at me !"

Then, presently, to the sound of "trumpets also and shawms," slowly, and with measured tread, entered the Viceroy himself in full decorated costume, preceded by his military secretary, handsome Seymour Blane, his breast glittering with medals, and by the members of the personal staff, the foreign secretaries, and other government functionaries in attendance, upon whose appearance the assembled concourse rose, and silently stood, till after mounting the scarlet-laid dais, and, standing erect, Sir John Lawrence, on the cessation of the royal salute, with well-known mien waved to all to be seated as he himself settled on his own gilded chair, his stalwart and grandiose native Body Guardsmen drawn up motionless and statuesque with unsheathed sabres behind him.

Then, one by one, the several chiefs were led each by the British representative at his court, in the same order of precedence, and presented at the foot of the dais, where proudly, but respectfully, he with both hands held out to the Viceroy his jewelled sword in token of his allegiance and of his proffered services, the Begum timidly offering in her turn her humble obeisance and prescribed nuzzur, followed in like manner by other chiefs and sirdars.

This ceremony over and every one returned to his place—no one turning his back, but retiring respectfully facing the Viceroy—and the several nuzzeranas or personal tributes removed after

acceptance in due form, indicated by a motion of the hand, and taken away to be added to the tōshakhānah or treasure store of the Foreign Office, there were next brought in the same succession of primo-chieftainship, and laid before each titled recipient, trays, containing khilluts or robes of honour ; strings of pearls and other precious necklaces or turban ornaments ; swords, scimitars, and musical boxes, or gold watches and chains ; daggers and pistols ; occasionally, too, a brand new double-barreled gun or rifle freshened in green baize-lined mahogany case, and other various choice articles which formed the bulk of the presents of the Viceroy, each successional display being duly and gracefully acknowledged.

The royal visitors specially selected for the distinction, were next summoned to the daïs in turn, and adorned by the Viceroy in person with some specially reserved costly necklace, or ornament for the turban, or (as sometimes,) with some fine sword buckled on by himself—an highly esteemed honour.

All this over, and when all had been duly impressed by the value of the gifts thus bestowed or accepted, and due pause had ensued, Sir John Lawrence rose from his chair of state and addressed the assembled chieftains, the whole company standing up simultaneously in silent attention. He spoke in fluent Oordoo, and though ordinarily, somewhat both rough and gruff in voice as in aspect, his noble form and bearing, kindly utterances, face beaming with a graciousness kindled

by his ever soft, however usually keen and searching eyes, discovered on the present occasion, a gentleness of heart and a fascination well known to his intimate acquaintances in moods of companionship, and which the rapt *Cœlicolæ magni*,⁵ as they might have been addressed, "Maharajahs, rajahs, and sirdars" of the mixed assembly, seemed profoundly impressed with, though scarcely prepared for. *Conticuerunt omnes*, they hung, spell-bound, upon his every word as though they beheld the presence and heard the voice of an awatar. Benignantly regarding them in stately attitude, he welcomed them all to his durbar, was gratified to see and become acquainted with so many chiefs of rank and reputation, and to be able to tell them his wishes; and then, in chosen words and well-rounded sentences idiomatically formed, he spoke to them of the importance of their high position as rulers and leaders among people; of the expectations of the Government of India; that loyalty, the foremost thereof, was always a leading requirement; good government should be their load-star and guiding principle; misrule was their bane; the happiness and contentment of their subjects and compatriots should be their constant aim; the suppression of violence and oppression, *of rapine and plunder, the safety of the lives and property as*

⁵ The Viceroy's memorable address to this great assemblage of potentates, might, indeed, have been thus prefaced, *heaven-born*, being the pretension of some at least of them: for do not the rulers of Odeypore, Jeypore and other Rajpoot states, claim, more or less, to be descendants of the sun and the moon?

well of their people as of strangers sojourning among them or passing through their territories, their every effort ; to compass the peace and prosperity of all around them the exercise of their minds and endeavours : such were the pretensions of the British nation who watched their efforts, such the hope and the desire of the British Sovereign ever solicitous of their welfare : those who laboured in such principles might be assured of obtaining favour and, Asooka-like, as the Viceroy might have added,⁶ of being commended as he would com-

⁶ P.S.—For Asooka's name is in every prince's mouth and his memory is constantly invoked. "Beloved of the Gods" was the title ascribed to Asooka, or "Pyadási," as he was also named, as engraved in inscriptions upon rocks and monoliths scattered about India. Renowned for piety and a spirit of toleration where there existed so many forms of religion, his memory, or rather the traditions respecting him, are held in great reverence throughout the Peninsula, and he is exampled for those high qualities as the Persian monarch Nowshirwán and hero Roostum, equally are for benevolence in the one and high courage in the other. He was a great king and held sway over the vast regions extending from Behar, anciently called Magádha, to Cape Comorin, and even, as has been affirmed, over Ceylon. At first the inexorable persecutor of the Buddhist sect, whose beliefs had at that period (about 250 years B.C.) taken fast hold over the greater part of the country, he at length (in parallel character with St. Paul *even to the miracle*, and with the Emperor Constantine in respect of Christianity,) himself professed the new faith and became its most zealous propagandist ; and wherever the revered Boodha, his great exemplar, the renowned founder of the doctrine about 250 years previously, had laboured or his relics been preserved, Asooka erected monasteries, formed drinking wells, constructed reservoirs, raised *topes*, or planted groves. His famous edicts, engraved on stones and pillars existing to the present day throughout the country from the Himaláyas to the southernmost promontory of the land, abound with precepts of all the essential rules of conduct, and bequeath to his successors and all rulers, the practice of toleration and benevolence, the most remarkable among the many maxims and principles inculcated in those "sermons on

mend to their example the Maharajah Scindia, the Begum of Bhopal, the lamented Nawáb of Jowra lately deceased, the Raja of Seetamow, who, though ninety years old, was vigorous in the good management of his country, and the Raja of Khêtree then recently publicly honoured; but not so they who ruled with force and with cruelty, or, in the sense of apathy and inertness, ruled not at all, unmindful as well of their high responsibilities as of the sure limit to the endurance and toleration of the greater power ruling over themselves:—from such the British Government would deflect and be against, nor would befriend—but it will honour that chief most who excels in the good management of his people, *who does most to put down crime*, and improve the condition of his country. All listened attentively and with bowed heads, betokening acquiescence—every utterance in the eloquent address being understood by them all. Not so, I fear, by some of those on our side of the dais, if to be judged from some blank faces and whispered inquiries, “What did he say?”—one

stones,” being the injunction to respect the religion of others, “for thereby you not only fortify your own, but assist the faith of others;” *the identical policy of the British Government in India as it was of the Emperor Akhbar!*

Asooka flourished in the third century preceding the Christian era. The *Revue des deux Mondes* recently contained an article from the pen of M. Emile Senart, of the Institute of France, giving a highly interesting account of the famous monarch, of the great difficulties long encountered in deciphering the stone inscriptions which proclaimed his edicts and revealing the principles enjoined in them; a useful study for an aspiring political economist.—(Vide article, *Un Roi de l'Inde*, in the number of the magazine *Revue des deux Mondes* for March, 1889.)

well known compatriot asking aside why he did not preferably "spake to thim in Irish, his own tongue?" and being answered in the same undertone, "We should have been none the wiser, you know," none the less replying that, "shure" he was, he spoke to the purpose, and was full ready too, "to smite them all round" (*chastise* would, perhaps, have been our Cromwell's own more wonted expression when minuting the measure of reproof to be administered to a defaulter.)⁷

All this over and the ceremony completed of rookhsut, or leave-taking, with its accustomed concomitants of distribution of pawn-leaf and beetul-nut, unctioning with ûttur, the sprinkling of rose-water, and adornment with too odoriferous garlands, dispensed to each personage in due rotation by the secretaries in attendance, the Viceroy rose, bowed with much dignity, first to us on his left and then to the chieftains on his right, and, in the previous order of procession, quitted the audience-tent by its front face, followed, after due interval, by the Lieutenant-Governors and their suites, and by the Commander-in-Chief and his staff. The several chiefs were thereafter led out ceremoniously, ever in the succession of rank, by appointed officers, and being again taken through

⁷ "Chastise him once, chastise him twice, and if not enough give it him thrice," was the admonition said to be endorsed by Sir John on the papers relating to one such offender; but the able, though bumptious recalcitrant, "did not refuse to receive correction" but harked back at the first note of the warning, and eventually rose, it has been said, if not to be a lieutenant-governor, to very near it.

the still drawn-up guard of honour and duly saluted by it, were conducted to their respective elephants, or left to their own special sowárries or processional cortèges, while we all on our parts dispersed each to his tent, or camp, to repair anon to our respective Messes, or to dine at the tents of the many high political officers encamped in state round about dispensing hospitality, foremost among whom were the Agents to the Governor-General for Rajpootanah and the States of Central India; or "by command" to dine scarcely more sumptuously, although certainly more resplendently, at the Viceregal table, of whom I was one thus honoured.

The ceremony of paying and receiving private visits to and from the several rulers of the first class on the part of the Viceroy, attended, however, with every ceremonial of etiquette, was the laborious task of the next and succeeding days. It was said that on these occasions sundry jobations and awakening reminders were dealt out to certain of them in the style Sir John Lawrence so well knew how to assume; nor was the opportunity lost, I believe, to reiterate in their private interviews, the counsel to allow *no rest or refuge to professional criminals escaping to or located in their limits, and in co-operating with our own "suppression" endeavours against them*, more pointedly than had been enjoined in open durbar—a circumstance which afforded much congratulation to myself.

My own camp was pitched during the durbar among some fine trees, musical with numberless

birds, in a straggling "compound" or hedged-in enclosure on the outskirts of the too-expanded cantonment limits, an equally isolated mess house of a native infantry regiment of the garrison lying out in the same direction. To leave my card at the mess and be hospitably invited by its members to dinner and kindly entertained, was only what was usual in the friendly intercourse kept up throughout the service. The officers serving with that particular corps⁸ were very few in number, a result of the new organization of the Native Army on the irregular system, by the introduction whereof the old regimental cadres were broken up, put out of joint and shattered—too few for hard service, however sufficient for sustaining discipline and for the purposes of instruction, but scarcely, I fear, enough for the exigencies of war and to lead, except readily supplemented—however noble the example that handful of British officers would be certain to set to their men.⁸

⁸ Of this need for more officers, an example was furnished in the then recent Umbeylah campaign. The check experienced in forcing the Pass created consternation. Reinforcements were hurriedly ordered up; young officers "doing duty" with the several regiments elsewhere, as hastily gathered and sent up as though to the shambles. Right eager they all were, all the same, to join in the fray, to take part in the anticipated "jolly good mill." The sacrifice was bound, but happily not yet required, the occasion being averted by the accession of the called for succours and by a skilfully managed and spirited, though not too timely, extraction from the ugly "situation." Two frontier tribes were erroneously supposed to be at deadly feud. One held and fortified the Pass; British troops were sent to dispossess it and failed. Ill-armed, except with bucklers and gleaming naked falchions and crack shooting *jezails* or long match-locks, and

An elephant had been placed at my disposal by a friendly rajah—one accustomed, I was assured, to the noisiest of tummáshas, or shows, and often used by that sporting prince in his tiger-shooting expeditions. A grand review taking place of all the assembled troops, under the personal command of the Commander-in-Chief, Sir William Mansfield, as a fitting termination of the entire proceeding and to afford a significant spectacle to the assembled native chieftains, I went to witness it upon this elephant, accompanied by two ladies whom I was suffered to escort, the distinguished husband of one of whom was in attendance on the Viceroy as an aide-de-camp. And a very splendid sight was the martial array of so many regiments and troops of all arms marching past in full panoply! Then followed some manœuvres. Presently a battery of Horse Artillery galloped to the front, unlimbered, and opened fire, scattering spectators in all directions and heaving back the surging crowd of lookers on, mounted and afoot. Our own and some other elephants were driven, whether we would or not, into the reserved space fronting the Viceroy's camp—a very *surna* to us fugitives we thought the forbidden sanctum to be—but soon the artillery rushed up outside there also, and we were forced into the entanglement of

unorganized, the brave savages defied our ability to dislodge them from behind their *sungas* or stone entrenchments hastily thrown up on well-chosen commanding heights. We well remember the panic and the hurried assemblage of numerous forces as though to repel invasion. The feeling in the provinces was, “the Mutiny was on again somewhere!”

the numerous tent ropes. The several mahouts in vain endeavoured, by thumps and sundry, now cajolements, now maledict protestations, to persuade the ponderous beasts "to take it calmly and be more dignified." Our own paragon was perhaps the worst behaved of all; she raised her trunk erect and shrilly trumpeted her exceeding alarm, and presently she broke through every restraint, and, despite every effort of cajolery or the contrary, and the many cruel knocks upon her head with the sharp-edged ankoos or iron goad of her exasperated and now fairly bewildered driver, she bolted. I could not have supposed an animal so unwieldy and so bulky, to become indeed a *charger* and to speed so swiftly! She tore along, and, though suffering herself to be guided, she minded not the trees on the directed way, but frantically rushed under their boughs, nor stopped for crowd, or vehicle, or beast. Fortunately the two ladies had melted away with fright, and had sunk down into the howdah, thus enabling me, for myself, seated behind, to avoid by a succession of quick stoops the overhanging branches at imminent risk of being caught athwart by some of them. The elephant betook herself straightway to her tryst at my tents, and there at once became obedient, as though ashamed of herself, and suffered us to get down, gladly safe. But our escape was a narrow one, my two pale companions, who could barely speak, declaring they would never mount an elephant any more.

Another incident of the durbar was witnessed

by me. A space had been reserved on a side of the great durbar tent on an interesting occasion of the many ceremonies which were enacted, through which an aide-de-camp, the same fine officer above alluded to, handsomely conspicuous by his stature and the yellow uniform he wore of the dashing cavalry corps which he commanded, had strict orders to suffer no one to pass. A gentleman of high position wished ingress through the barrier in order to gain access to the assembly beyond it, he being late in otherwise getting there. He gave his name and civilian rank as an effectual *open sesame*, but the custodian, a *very Chamberlain*, was obdurate: "You may not enter by this way." The other demanded right of *entrée*, and chafed at the persistent refusal of it. The two were unacquainted with each other, and whatever the high official rank of the applicant, the aide-de-camp would not transgress his "orders." The other, suffused and wrathful, turned to me who was standing by, "How suffer this indignity?" "Let it pass—mindful of the laws of the Medes and Persians—he has been *commanded*"—and with this he was slowly, though reluctantly, appeased.

Yet another incident, but one which occasioned regret throughout the camp, and to no one more than to the Viceroy himself. A member of his personal staff, a brother of the estimable officer whose touching memoirs of the campaign in the Crimea had interested so many, and were fresh

in our memories, suddenly became strangely affected. Always somewhat eccentric and of silent humour, he now broke out into a religious fervour—ravingly insane—necessitating the strictest restraint and his immediate removal to Calcutta and shipment home. I take the following from my notice of the occasion at the time: “He has been sent away under the charge of a couple of European soldiers. A sample of the manner of his affliction was painfully exhibited in the description he gave as to how ‘eternal praise’ was outspoken on high, beginning with ‘glory’ softly, and then raising exclamations of it, higher and higher, up to the greatest pitch of maniacal vociferation, ‘glory! glo-ory! glo-o-o-ry!’ And then the poor stricken fellow enquired as he lay exhausted, whether we thought ‘that was not like it.’ He had frequently dined at Longwood (our mountain home,) and latterly, at Simlah, I used daily to meet him late of evenings, riding ever on the Snowdon side of the Jako mountain, where, in that neighbourhood, resided one for whom it was believed he was secretly possessed by a dumb passion. Amiable and a good fellow, his sudden affliction was greatly lamented by his fellow Aides, who all were much attached to him.”⁹

My motive for attending the Durbar was twofold, as well by means of my detectives to beat

⁹ P.S.—Major Vicars soon after died at home. He had in some way managed to set fire to his clothes and was burnt to death.

about in the many camp bazaars and assemblages for information of the designs of professional plunderers, whose scouts would, we knew, be busy moving about the great throngs there gathered from so many different parts of the country in quest of news of booty ; as personally to urge the advantage presented by so opportune an occasion for impressing upon the many assembled chieftains the necessity to adopt more effectual measures for suppressing the evil, and more directly to aid the efforts of the special department over which I presided, in putting down their depredations, more particularly the excesses perpetrated by Meena Dacoits who infested their territories, or from safe retreat there, raided in contiguous British districts, against whom our operations were at that period more directly aimed, who plundered convoys of treasure and other goods, not only in the regions of Rajpootana and adjacent native states, but even while under conveyance through British limits bordering thereon. The habit of these enterprising robbers on such occasions was, to ride fleet camels, and after pouncing on their prey, as precipitately to disappear and escape with their easily acquired booties with impunity to their haunts in Shekawatie or other frontier retreats ; and if tracked or pursued, to find ready *surna* or asylum therein, conceded as that shelter from long custom commonly had been, to all seekers of it under the sanction of unfrangible and potential "sanctuary"—a mere pretence as regarded such fugitives, for there was no actual "laying hold of

the horns of the altar," although to arrest persons thus fled, would surely be productive of gravity in cases in which the retreat reached, should have been into the limits of any one of certain appointed places of *surna*, or into any village-bounds inhabited by the priestly tribe called Charuns, or *Sidhs* as they are locally termed, when to violate the refuge gained, would be taken up as an outrage and be resented.¹

¹ P.S.—Cháruns are to the Rajpoots what Brahmins are to Hindoos. I have often had occasion to bring these remarkable devotees under notice. They harboured criminals of the worst description, under the excuse of sanctuary, and set at defiance every authority. "The Durbar officers were afraid, however, of the dreaded power of the Cháruns, in whose villages principally the asylum was sought, their habit being to maim and even occasionally to destroy themselves when their precincts were invaded, the reproach of which was viewed with religious horror by those to whom these fanatics imputed the blame. The *zenana* villages, too, or dowered domains of royal ladies still existing throughout Rajpootanah, afforded similar sanctuaries independent of the authority of the local *Hakims* or district governors." (*Colonel Hervey to the Secretary to the Government of India, Foreign Department, No. 199, dated 21st April, 1866.*) A remarkable instance of intimidation of this kind was enacted at Bikaner, after I had vacated office. Affront had been taken at the arrest by the local durbar, of their Mohunt or Abbot, and of some others of the brotherhood. A numerous band of *sidhs* thereupon appeared at a very early hour of the morning at the door of the residence of the late Captain Burton, the Assistant General Superintendent there posted as he also latterly was in my own time, who vociferously clamoured for the immediate release of their headman, and, flourishing their swords, knives and daggers, threatened to commit instant suicide then and there if refused. They squatted themselves outside of that officer's gateway for two entire days, continually shouting their demand. On the third morning it was perceived they had dug out several holes in the ground in each of which an individual of the persistent band had seated himself in expectant attitude as though ready to be buried alive, while the rest declared they all would now certainly destroy themselves. Persuaded to abide the result of the inquiry, they next resolutely abstained from food, and on the fifth day of the self-imposed

More hearty co-operation was wanted from Native Rulers generally; more particularly, on the side of Rajpootanah, from the Rajahs of Jeypore and Bikaner, and the many chieftains and petty Thakoors among whom the region called "Shekawátie," or country of the Shekávats, was parcelled out; as also from the feudal lord of Khêtree, whose domains (included in that region under the suzerainty of the Ruler of Jeypore,) afforded from their situation, ready access to plunderers escaping from the conterminous districts of Delhi and *vice versâ*—as related in the Journal.

In Rajpootanah trade and commerce were, in a measure, paralyzed, not only through the fear and tribulation ever present to those who followed trade through such dreary regions, but arising from the habit of levying black-mail, arrogated by the lawless Thakoors whose solitudes they traversed—those petty lords of small and attenuated holdings, so here more appropriately to designate their diminutive "territories" than to style them *lordships*, whose barren lands are only to be measured by tracts of unyielding sand dunes and are revenue-less, partitioned as these "possessions" have been again and again, becoming lesser and

starvation, some of them seemed to be really dying of hunger. On the following day the investigation of the local durbar against the Sidh abbot being concluded, he was enlarged, whereupon the fanatics, having gained their point, began to take food, and two days subsequently, on recovering sufficient strength, they dispersed to their desert habitations (Vide Captain Burton's report on Bikaner for 1877-78.)

less, and yet more restricted and in number multiplied at every demise of the impoverished lordlings, their followers, consequently in worse plight and necessitous, becoming predatory in proportion to their increasing neediness—whom Tod their historian, friend as he was of the chiefs and people of Rajasthán, himself described to be both unprincipled and unscrupulous, and other observers as incorrigible robbers and hangworthy. Barring predatory predilections born of their bedouin habits acquired from life in desert wastes, their present miserable circumstances were not of their own creation—they had no part in the occasion thereof, but were inevitably impelled thereby to take to the roads, *faute de mieux*, as their only means of any readier subsistence. Such people it was my eager aim to suppress by all means, and, for the unlawfulness of their deeds of violence, to hound. For, as in other conditions, there are Thakoors and Thakoors—Robin Hoods and Rob Roys, and not Dick Turpins and Jack Shepherds only—of whom, for nobility and chivalrous instincts, I think it will be seen I have presented specimens who in habitual courtliness and fair faith, were clothed with both dignity and manliness.

The unlawful and oppressive cess alluded to, imposed at the peril of the lives of those from whom it was demanded, and locally called Rekwáli, was exacted for the safe-conduct of the caravans of merchandise traversing the successive demesnes and holdings of each needy Thakoór who claimed and

enforced, or if denied it, plundered the entire column, despite the armed convoys supposed to guard it, their shoutings, their threats and wordy defiances—for these guards or escorts generally at once surrendered to the exaction, or abandoned their charge at the first indication of the sudden swoop upon them.

In our own bordering districts too, the roads were intermittently equally unsafe, and even mail carts and *dák* runners were not exempted from plunder, notwithstanding the “precautions,” so to call the ineffectual guards of horsemen appointed to and supposed to escort them.

This state of things it was a part of my special duties to endeavour to cope with, and to do so inexorably.

But this was not all—connected therewith the crime of poisoning, that is, of Thuggee by means of poison, also engaged my close attention, in addition to many other requirements of a like nature. The prosecution of the latter crime had of recent years, by reason of the insufficiency of the obtaining law against it, and the consequent inability of the special thuggee police to apply the “approver system” for its suppression, been allowed to languish. It prevailed, more or less, throughout India. The habit of the miscreants who practised it, was to administer poison in various forms, more generally through the medium of the seeds of the *dhatūra* plant, procurable broadcast at every wayside, to travellers on the road or when alighted in towns or villages; and it had in a measure,

superseded the old crime of thuggee by strangling them, and consequently belonged to the cognizance of the special police under my control. The crime of poisoning travellers (departmentally called "dhaturea," from the more frequent use of the seeds of the dhatura plant—*Dhatura stramonium*—for its purposes,) was described of long date, to be quite as old as that of thuggee by strangulation, and with which, indeed, it was often combined—that is to say, small parties of strangling Thugs detached from the main gangs when set out upon their annual expeditionary "suffers" or professional journies, for information of *bunneej*, or prize booty, were in the habit, for want of present means and of more hands for strangling purposes according to constitutional "thuggee," of joining themselves all the same to travellers, "with venom'd drug and magic lay" decoying them, and then on fitting opportunity, poisoning and robbing them, not caring whether the victims recovered or died. I had, as will be seen, often directed attention to this defiant mode of scoundrelism and foul play, and had urged upon Government the necessity to adopt more stringent legislation against it, as also to pass some special law, not only restricting the free sale of poisonous drugs, but to make it punishable to be found in the possession of them. A deplorable case of the kind had now recently taken place in distant Bombay, within the scope of my general supervision. It happened in this wise. It was and continues to be a habit of a class of traders from above the Passes, called Powindahs,

(a sturdy and enterprising race resembling, I have often thought, the Ishmaelite merchantmen who "came from Gilead with camels bearing spicery, balm, and myrrh, going to carry it down to Egypt," who on the journey down, bought Joseph "for twenty pieces of silver" and conveyed him into Egypt,²) to come down every year through the

² For some confirmation of this idea, the reader may be referred to a highly interesting and graphic account of the recovery of an European lad, son of an English officer, from one of these wandering traders come down to India with camels bearing "dried fruits, grapes, apples and pomegranates," and sundry kittens from Bokhâra. The child's parents were of the number of our countrymen massacred at Cabool in the disaster of 1842. Saved by their Hindustani Ayah (who herself soon after fell a victim to the intense cold,) the infant was handed over by her with a view to its preservation, together with certain articles for its identification (including a miniature likeness of the child's beautiful young mother,) to an Affghan shopkeeper—a dealer in warm clothing residing in the Cabool bazaar—and by him was tenderly nourished but regarded as his slave; upon whose death, a few years subsequently, the lad, described as an equally beautiful boy, an exact resemblance of his unfortunate mother (as satisfactorily proved by the recovered portrait,) became the property of the Caboollee's brother, the said Pôwindah, and was taken about by him, dressed and brought up as an Affghan, on his periodical trading expeditions to the remotest European stations in India, "down to Calcutta, to Simlah, Mussoorie," wherever the English resided. He became greatly attached to the youth; the feeling was reciprocated, and though the trader took him about on those distant journeys in view, he averred, I think truthfully, to the boy being some day claimed, he was now most unwilling to part with him, declaring he was his purchased slave, bought from another travelling merchantman for the price of three camels "at thirty rupees each," and whom, from his affection for him, he had solemnly sworn never to sell, the boy being equally distracted at the idea of being separated from one who had so fondly taken care of and tenderly reared him. But the man, faithful to his promise to his deceased brother, gave the unwilling lad up on his identity being incontestably proved by the miniature and the articles of jewellery restored with it. (Vide *Wanderings in India*, 12th December, 1857, page 12, vol. xvii. of *Household Words*.)

defiles leading into India, accompanied by kuttárs, or strings of camels laden with sun-dried fruits, apricots or zurdáloos, pistacheos, raisins, pomégranates, &c., besides drugs of the condiment sorts, and with bales of that peculiarly soft cloth known as pushmeena, so called from the pushm or shawl-wool from which it is manufactured, and sold both in piece or made up into chógahs, those warm and comfortable cloaks so much prized by the European community, not to omit a rougher kind of woollen cloth of an exceeding warmth-giving description called puttoo, made from the coarser combings of pushm mixed up with ordinary black wool ; and valuable furs of sorts—all eagerly purchased. Long-haired Persian cats, so-called, although imported from Bokhára (oftener of the tabby species than of the all-black or pure white and tortoise-shell breeds,) may also be found stowed away in the recesses of their khorcheens or camel saddle-bags, and occasionally too, the delicious sweetmeat like melon, called surdah, carefully wrapped in flannel ; or they come down as horse dealers, importing those sturdy little galloways called yáboos, for which there is always a ready sale in India—strong, sure-footed little animals, of great endurance and particularly suited for hill travelling. Penetrating with such merchandise the most distant parts of India, and by the present railway facilities even as far as Cape Comorin its remote southernmost extremity, it is the custom of these itinerant hawkers, after the disposal of their goods, to congregate and rest,

like swallows preparatory to migration, at some principal town or city along their routes, or to go down to Calcutta or Bombay—this even before the days of railway travelling—and there occupy themselves in purchasing from their gains, certain cotton piece goods and parti-coloured fabrics and gew-gaws, which to take back to and dispose of profitably in their own distant country. Though fine fellows and stalwart, and ready bargainers too, they are, from presumed safety in vaunted British amildéree or jurisdiction, an unwary lot, and it was not difficult to dupe or cajole such unaccustomed strangers. Their caravans also have not infrequently been waylaid and plundered, for all their stout resistance, by bands of the very robbers I have above described, while traversing Rajpootanah and other regions as wild and unprotected.³

³ A great shawl robbery in the direction of Nusseerabad of old date was a remarkable instance of the shikár offered to plunderers by these persevering traders (mentioned in the Journal). I might instance also, the more recent plunder of a like caravan near Kakánee in Jodhpoor territory, before dawn of the 12th January, 1874, in which one of the powindahs was slain, in personally intercepting the gang by which this outrage had been perpetrated as it was escaping with its booty—fifteen robbers riding rapidly on fifteen camels, each with a bale of plunder fastened on behind him—at a point seventy miles distant from the scene of the plunder, early in the morning of the 14th January, was my chance. I committed them all for trial on the capital charge, but they one and all escaped from the Ajmere jail, to which I had sent them, by climbing the walls one very stormy night. The leader of the gang, when I stopped and questioned him the morning I met him and his fleeing companions, impudently replied (all being in fact Bourrea dacoits) that his name was “Hookumjee Rhatore” and that he and the men with him “belonged to the Camel Corps commanded by Futtehjee Rhatore of Jeypore,” and further that

At Bombay then, shortly before the period at which my Journal opens, several such Affghan strangers, there as often elsewhere called "Caboo-tees," had collected. Having mostly disposed of their merchandise, they were occupying the leisure in making suitable purchases for gainful disposal among their own countrymen on their return home. Following on the simultaneous admission of several blind mendicants in a like condition, one or more of these Cabooles had during the past three or four weeks, now and again been conveyed in a state of insensibility to the great hospital at Mazagon, that monument of the munificence of the benevolent Parsee baronet, Sir Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy, whose name it bears—whom, and his equally charitably disposed son and successor, Sir Cursetjee, I used to be acquainted with when stationed in my early career at Bombay acquiring the native languages. Within the previous fortnight as many as eighteen similar admissions of Cabooles had taken place, and on the 18th December, a Caboolee was admitted suffering from dhatoora poisoning, who died the same day from the effects thereof. This to be sure was at that date the only fatal case among this particular class of victims at Bombay. They probably escaped with their lives, from their robust constitutions and the

the bales (about which I had made no inquiry) contained the property under their escort of the "Kowurjee," or heir apparent of Jeypore, "then journeying from a visit to Pôhkurn." The individual named Futtehjee is identical with the favourite courtier at Jeypore, whose complicity with dacoits and malpractices are so frequently alluded to in this Journal.

prompt medical aid afforded at the excellent institution mentioned, so close as it was to the Caboollee quarter; but the inquiry resulted in an opinion duly recorded, that "systematic poisoning had for some time been practised by some unknown criminals upon that class of strangers"; and this not only because they were easy victims, but for the belief that they were selected because of the smaller chance of their dying from the effects of the drug than if administered to the ordinary inhabitants, and consequently giving smaller cause for apprehension to those practising the crime, of any further inquiry as to the culprits. These fresh cases happened opportunely for my recent representations regarding the crime.

*It will thus be seen that our responsibilities were great, the range of our inquiries extensive, and that apart from the difficulties attending them among an habitually apathetic people, we had to contend with secret crime, and darkly grope about for information where we were likely to be misled, and to burrow unassisted through much that was immaterial, until able to join together the *disjecta membra*, and at last obtain the sought for clue—no easy matter to unravel, entangled as it generally was in a maze of intricacies. The science of detection teaches that if called upon to explain how obtained, you are unable to individualize the information acquired. The practised detective runs, spider-like, upon many threads before he hits upon the unraveling one that will lead him to his fly, and he instinctively follows it. Perhaps*

it is the swish of a petticoat round the corner of a street, or the jerking of a *sáree*, the peculiarity of a whistle, some unguarded prevarication or un-supposed inconsistency, the slip utterance of some manufactured word or slang expression, down-held eyelids, the lurking look peering through the corners thereof, the too-ready self-accusing excuse, or protestation of respectability, or, like Constance Kent, Lefroy, and Mrs. Maybrick, of innocence, or volunteered replies to unasked questions; he will watch too, for expressions which their warmth convey of a prevailing uneasiness, or which by their emphasis betray secret trouble—an uncertainty and disquietude—withal the warmth of the make-believe or assured assertion. These and such like other indications are so many whispers in the air, words in the ear, and betokenings, which a close detector will watch for and take note of, and which lead him to be sure of his course, and from out of the whole commingled mass of his inquiries, conduct him to alight upon his *find*.

About the same period too (November 4th,) some Rhatore dacoits, led by a daring leader named Kishen Sing, of whom there is frequent mention in the Journal, on a very dark night rescued four important prisoners, his confederates in crime—too dangerous to himself to be left to our inquiry or longer in our custody—from the lock-up of my assistant at Jalnah, the late Major W. G. Ward—who, although in fetters, broke safely away. The hour one o'clock, the night solemnly

dark, they suddenly fell upon the much-alarmed sentinel on duty at the gate of the inclosure, threatened to shoot him if he stirred, and then, on one of their number being lifted over the wall to open the door from the inside, obtained admission into the forbidden precincts, and, releasing their comrades, at once fled away. At a short distance off, the rescued men relieved themselves of their fetters, and then all mounting upon camels waiting among some baubool trees hard by, they soon placed distance behind them and got clear away, as described in the Journal.

And while this was being enacted down there, and the durbar camp at Agra had not yet been broken up, a party of free-booters called Bedow-reahs—a desperate class, who used very much to infest the neighbouring districts of the north-west provinces, and being put down there by the thuggee police, had since ensconced themselves in Bind and the ravines and forest ranges bordering on the Agra frontier, taking advantage of the absence of the ruler of Dholepore and his sirdars at the durbar—crossed into the latter territory and there committed several outrages, under the leadership of a noted outlawed rebel of the same tribe, named Gujjádhur Sing. A small party of our detective police happened at that time to be in their immediate neighbourhood, of whom four men (two nujeehs and a couple of budhuck approvers,) had been deputed into those jungles for information of them. They fell into the clutches of the rebel band, and were at once dispatched. Tied back to

back, and barbarously hacked about, their bodies were tossed into the Chumbul river which flows through that region. The thuggee duffedar in command of the party, upon learning of this—for the murderer defiantly sent him word of it—at once gathered together some horse and foot in the service of the Dholepore State on duty in that tract, penetrated the forest, and coming upon the ruffian crew, at once engaged with them. In the running fight that ensued, the loss on our side was a rissaldar or squadron officer of the Dholepore levy, and a nujeeb of the thuggee police killed, besides two nujeebs wounded. On the side of the dacoits one man was killed and two taken prisoners, the rest of the gang getting away under cover of the night, and of the forest and the difficult ground. The untoward incident will be found narrated in the Journal.

Again, in the same connection it may be mentioned that with all the vigilance supposed to be maintained in the camps assembled at the great durbar of the day and the information acquired of several gangs being abroad casting about for news of booty, one gang did presently acquire a rich booty upon intelligence obtained through their scouts at Agra. These had learnt that a large consignment of treasure had recently been received there by railway from Calcutta, and was about to be forwarded upon camels to its destination at Jeypore. The dacoits laid their plans accordingly. The leader of the gang in the vicinity to whom the information was taken, thought there was too close

a look out kept up for them to plunder the convoy anywhere near to Agra, and that he could only safely despoil it after it should have crossed into native limits; and this was acted upon. The treasure was under the escort of ten armed men. It was watched and followed from stage to stage, and when the convoy had penetrated into a pass, or hilly gorge, a march from Jeypore, and had alighted for the night in the local bazaar at a place called Môhunpoora, the scene of previous successes, it was set upon under the declared pretext that it was attempting to evade payment of the transit duties, the robbers impudently asserting that they were themselves the appointed Government Revenue Officers. This on the night of the 28th November of the falling year preceding the date of the Journal. The escort, a stronger one than usually employed,⁴ fled the moment they perceived that these fellows were highwaymen. The whole of the consignment was thereupon plundered. It consisted principally of reals, silver in brick, and coral beads, to the extent of rupees 41,310, as narrated in the Journal (pages

⁴ A good deal was officially represented by me at a later date, on the subject of the slender guards usually attending the conveyance of treasure and valuable goods through the country (v. para. 57 of Report to the Foreign Secretary, No. 1160 A., date 30th November, 1869); of the utter disregard on the part of the remitters to the requirement of more efficient escorts; that this indifference arose from the unsafe native insurance system; and of the advisability of attaching police escorts to such convoys; but that even police guards had proved to be insufficient, of which two notable instances are afforded in the year of the Journal.

122, 123, vol. ii.) I append here, in a footnote, an account of the strange action that followed the inquiry into this case as taken from the same official report. It can hardly fail, although long, to be of interest, as affording a sample of the native modes of administration in like cases.⁵

⁵ "Possessed of much, in want of nothing, always suspected; seldom detected, frequently arrested, generally released, searched and little found, accused and nothing proved, it may be supposed that so keen and artful a race would not be slow to adopt the measures for their deliverance from custody when occasionally arrested, which the technicalities and the leniency of the laws, the venality or the scruples of those who administer them, and their own wealth and penetration, should give them the opportunity and the means for effecting. Whenever a Meena is arrested subscriptions are readily raised among themselves for his release, acquittal, or the annulment of the sentence which may have been passed upon him; and so certain is this course in the Rajwára or Native States, that a Meena or any wealthy criminal, may, in the words of a great writer, obtain 'not only the reversal of the sentence by which he was justly condemned, but may also inflict whatever punishment he pleases on the accuser, the witnesses and the judge.' (*Giblon.*)

"An illustration of this may perhaps be gathered from the annexed papers; for although the occasion therein narrated should refer to another territory, the criminals concerned in it were not the less associated with the Meenas located in the British district of Shajánpoor. An highly favoured Courtier, a near attendant of the Sovereign, was charged with complicity in a dacoitie which had recently been committed on a treasure convoy at Môhunpoora, close to the capital (Jeypore.) The robbery was declared to be the deed of a gang of Meenas specially engaged by himself, and it was stated that several of the members of it belonged to a Camel Corps or *Rissálah*, under his personal command; also that the plunder obtained, consisting of coral beads, silver in brick, a quantity of *reals* and other money to a considerable amount, was conveyed to his house. Several Meenas were seized for this robbery, of whom five belonged to the Camel *Rissálah* alluded to, and three of these *were in our rolls as registered dacoits*. Brought to trial before one of the International Courts of Vakeels, they were, with one exception, found guilty, and were heavily sentenced to various terms of transportation beyond the seas, and compensation to the plundered Mahájuns to the full amount of their loss

But scarcely was this the only audacity displayed by these Dacoits. The robbery of Her

with costs, was decreed against the State. The complicity of the favourite was at the same time pronounced, and his dismissal from office and expulsion from the territory were recommended. He had come over to the Court in the retinue of one of the two princesses of a foreign house with whom the Ruler had contracted marriage, and he presided over the household of both ladies, was possessed of ample means, and was honoured, moreover, with the rank and title of a Thakoor or Baron ; and, as a person who had constant access to the Sovereign, his reputation was too intimately connected with the good name of his royal master, to be lightly spoken of. But the inquiry had been conducted with vigour and research ; approaches to a compromise been rejected, and every door closed to the frequent attempts to give a favourable complexion to the case where it should affect the accused courtier, although forfeiture of all goodwill and consideration should be the inevitable consequences of refusal. The native official who presided over the *gírráee* (a special police department in the service of the local government,) had taken the bold but fatal part of assisting the successful prosecution of the arraigned criminals, by recording in his own *misál* (or file of proceedings in the case,) the evidence which had been *bona fide* elicited by him on the occasion of the robbery. He was supplanted, and his place conferred on one who had not long previously *been himself degraded* from a much higher office for appropriating a quantity of recovered property plundered in another territory (Joudpore,) by a gang of the same Shajanpoor Meenas, headed by a celebrated leader named Hursai Jemadar (as elicited when this man was eventually arrested.) And when finally the proceedings were referred to the higher International Court for confirmation, the sentences were reversed, the innocence of the criminals declared, the favourite exonerated, and his acquittal directed, the accusers cast into prison, the claim of the plundered parties to compensation disallowed, and the Court of Trial severely rebuked ! The Jeypore Ruler also evinced his own high displeasure and the umbrage he had taken, by a silent but well understood estrangement from the British agent at his Court who had presided at the trial, and by a studied reserve towards all the several Vakeels who had formed the court in the previous proceedings, which continued for some time. The papers on the subject reveal a specimen of the style of argument adopted by these peculiarly constituted tribunals when discord prevails and party feeling runs high. It was merely a coincidence that when at the capital indicated, very shortly after the dacoitie

Majesty's Mails was, and had for some time been their pastime—an occasional interlude indulged in when the merry men were casting about for heavier or more assured prize. They maintained confederates in the British Constabulary, in our Post Office establishments, among the personal Chup-prásees or belted men, and messengers in attendance on Magistrates and Commissioners, among the employés of the Commissariat Department, and even in the private employment of British officers, official and non-official, as also in some regiments of Native Infantry and Cavalry, as from time to time shown in the Journal; and from such coadjutors information of more or less promise was always at hand, and of the steps taken by the Sahibs for their detection. A line of Government mail carts and of Dak runners, conveyed the post between Agra and the adjacent Native States, bifurcating through the Central India States on the one side, and away through the depths and wastes of Rajpootanah on the other, and terminating at the railways (before their extension to

adverted to, but before these investigations had yet taken place, or suspicion of complicity in so high a quarter been entertained. I was permitted to visit the tuksál, or local mint, accompanied by some other officers. New rupees of local currency were being struck, and we observed that a quantity of *reals* was assayed and cast into the ready crucible. On my inquiring why coinage should be used for such a purpose, we were informed that the metal of that particular foreign money was very pure, and I was even presented with one of the pieces by the obsequious but unwary mint master." (Extracts paras. 95 and 96 from a general report addressed to the Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign Department, No. 1160A, dated 30th November, 1869.) ✎

Agra,) leading to Bombay the great postal terminus : and to these public mails, things of great value were intrusted despite all prohibitory post-office rules. The confederates in the post office at Agra, were generally able to communicate the despatch of something valuable by the mail, even if their frequently successful chance shots did not already assure the robbers that more or less booty was generally to be acquired in them. However this may be, on the night of the 27th November, a small gang of these plunderers stopt the mail running from Agra to Jeypore, near a place called Uchnêra, close upon the Bhurtpore frontier, but within British Territory. The spot was a favourite one for such diversions, the Dak having been similarly waylaid there both before and subsequently. The plunderers on this occasion consisted of a few men detached from the main gang. This had, as above shown, endeavoured to penetrate into Agra during the Durbar, but, scared by the vigilance kept up, had divided into two bands, the larger one accomplishing the following night the heavy treasure enterprise in the Mohunpocra Pass already described. One of the two mailbags now robbed was recovered entire, but the other one, which contained valuables, was found ript open, and its contents taken away, consisting of bullion and English sovereigns to the value of 5000 rupees, a circumstance which left no room to doubt but that the robbery was committed upon information supplied by confederates in the post office establishment. But this may not be

sweepingly to assert that the men in charge of the mails—the mail-cart drivers, or Dák runners—were themselves in league with these highwaymen ; it is not so meant. One or two confederates at the head or despatching post office, would suffice to take note of consignments, contents unknown but shrewdly conceived, entered in the chulláns or way-bills, or easily to ascertain that valuables were being forwarded in them by the outgoing mail. For it must be admitted as to the drivers and runners themselves, that they have, with some exceptions, done well in looking after the mail-bags intrusted to them, although in the generality of cases they have run away to hide, the moment the presence of robbers was known.

This affair was followed before the close of the year, by another similar robbery, again in British limits, on this occasion on the Ajmere frontier, a post-office employée in charge of the mail being in this case severely wounded ; and it would seem that the same gang committed the previous night yet another mail robbery on the high road, close to the same locality and in the same jurisdiction, at a spot where it impinged near Doorai, upon the territory of the Ruler of Kishenghur. In this latter affair one of the attacked party was shot dead. “Considering,” reported the district officer, “that upon the authority of the British political agent at Jeypore, that state alone sends nearly three *crores* of jewellery and bullion to Western India by means of the British post (*vide* vol. ii. p. 43,) all of which passes through the

length of the Ajmere district, surrounded as that district is by native territory," he thought "the occurrence was not to be wondered at;" adding, that "when these Dák robberies are numerous we may safely conclude that the Dák people themselves are the aiders and abettors." But in both of these particular cases *the people with the mails were maltreated.*

Going back next to deeds of poisoning in the period under consideration (close of 1866,) among other instances of that subtle crime in that interval, we had a case from Bendlekund of three persons, strangers to each other, travelling together, of whom one, a Brahmin, cooked the food of the other two, a Hindoo and a Mahomedan. The Brahmin one day produced some sweetmeats and "kindly" divided them between the other two, after eating of which they both became insensible and in that condition "were robbed by the *soi-disant* Brahmin." The Mahomedan died the following day, the other recovered. The culprit was not discovered.

The special detective operations in certain cases of this crime in Bengal have been mentioned in the Journal, notably the "Priest case" (*vide* vol. ii. pp. 1—8,) a decided *cause célèbre*, enshrouded as it was in mystery.

In connection with these researches the following remarkable case became at this period disclosed. It refers to some acts of poisoning in the same Province, of occurrence shortly antecedently. The crime prevailed in Bengal, and Mr. Reily, a very intelligent local police officer, of high detective

ability, had been specially appointed to the duty of unravelling them in communication with myself as head of the Thuggee department for all India. In a case, one of *two* handed over to him for inquiry, a man named *Uzgur Alli* appeared as the prosecutor, and one *Baboo Khan* as the accused. But it soon transpired that the first-named individual was himself the real culprit, and the other in point of fact a member of his gang and *particeps criminis*, or, in other words, that *Uzgur Alli* had pretended to have been drugged, and charged his retainer with the deed. Four persons had been drugged on the occasion, one of whom was a horse-dealer from Cabool, who, having disposed of his stud, was in the manner I have already described (pages 24 to 27,) returning to his home with the proceeds when met by the way by *Uzgur Alli* and his confederate *Baboo Khan*. These two rogues attached themselves to the traveller and ingratiated themselves so much with him as to be allowed to accompany him to Patna, and there they acquired the desired opportunity to possess themselves of his money. Their first attempt to do so was an endeavour to beguile him with some trinkets made of brass, which they declared to be of gold, but the other declared he had no need for such things. Whereupon, having persuaded the unsuspecting horse-dealer to bestow some money for road expenses upon a couple of indigent worshippers "travelling the same way," these persons were also allowed to accompany the party on their onward journey to Benares. *Baboo Khan*, who

pretended to be the other's servant, was now sent on ahead "to prepare food for them" at a serae, or traveller's resting-place. The horse-dealer, his now "greatly attached friend Uzgur Alli," and the two needy wayfarers, reached the spot in due course at nightfall, where they found food ready cooked for them, some rice and dháll or vetches. They sat down to the repast, a mendicant living at the hostelry, partaking of it with them; but the man Uzgur Alli and his pretended servant did not eat of the prepared pulse. The horse-dealer presently complained of feeling giddy and repaired to the dwelling of a local acquaintance and there became insensible; so also soon did the other three persons. The accomplice, Baboo Khan, thereupon fled; but Uzgur Alli, still intent on getting possession of the horse-dealer's purse, pretended to have been himself drugged, and he was even taken to the local hospital for cure. Desirous to keep on with the horse-dealer, he declared the absconded servant was the culprit, and that the fellow had on a previous occasion robbed him of a valuable "bill of exchange." The duped man still implicitly believed him, and on his own recovery was even induced to advance him a sum of ten rupees "with which to procure railway tickets" for their further journey! With this money Uzgur Alli disappeared. The horse-dealer now only became aware how much he had been deceived by him!

The other investigated case was in this wise: A party of five persons (one being a woman,) travelling from Calcutta, were beguiled by the way on

the road to Gya, by a man "who was profuse in his attentions," and on their arrival at a serae at the end of the stage of the day, they deputed him to the bazaar on *his own* proposal to purchase food and cooking utensils. Having eaten of the meal prepared therewith, some rice and dhál, they were next persuaded by him to hurry on "to catch the train," his object being to get them away from the public serae before the already administered drug should take effect, in view afterwards more easily to rob them. The five were by and by found by the police in a state of utter unconsciousness, lying about on the road leading to the railway station. On recovering they found they had been robbed of their money and apparel. From the description given by them of the stranger by whom they had been joined, the detective police felt convinced that he was identical with the man Uzgur Alli. This man had meantime been taken into custody in the previous case. The deputy-magistrate placed him among seven or eight other persons taken from the crowd. The woman, her fellow-travellers having meanwhile dispersed to their homes, at once picked him out as the man who had met her and her companions and had prepared the food, from partaking of which they had become insensible. He was sent up for trial in both cases. *The jury acquitted him.* But mark! only a few days subsequently this same Uzgur Alli was on trial on a fresh charge of causing the death of another traveller in the same neighbourhood by similarly drugging his food, on like evidence *con-*

victed by another jury, and sentenced to capital punishment !

Much professional poisoning had been taking place in different parts of the country—in some of the districts of Bengal, to an alarming extent, as already noticed. The perpetrators were not confined to any particular class, except that towards Calcutta they mostly belonged to a tribe called *Ooreahs* or men of Orissa, the descendants of a people so denominated, who used to commit Thuggee by strangling their victims, and of whom possibly, some among the present lot were survivors, some notice of whom may here be made. The race has been described to possess much low cunning and to be adepts at dissimulation. *Ooreahs* were, at the period of the formation of the special Thuggee department for the suppression of the diabolical system everywhere in India, the most vicious of all of this class of systematic murderers—and there were many who followed the terrible pursuit in the Lower Provinces—as cruelly villainous as were the Thugs of Arcot in Madras territory, with this distinction, however (of no consideration in the freemasonry of Thuggee,) that the latter were Mahomedans, the *Ooreahs* being Hindoos. It will be seen in the personal Journal, that to put down the equally dastardly system that had of late sprung up in Bengal on the footsteps of the old crime of Thuggee by strangulation, the Government of that Province had, as already stated (*ante* p. 38,) commissioned one of its ablest detective officers to proceed against the

criminals who in Bengal now practised it, and that he was required to do so in communication with myself as head of the Thuggee office. For at this period, consequent on the introduction of a new system of police administration, the executive agency of the "Thuggee department" had then lately been withdrawn from British districts and extended with greater scope to native territory. My own functions, therefore, were, in regard to Thuggee and Dacoitie in British territory, limited to the maintenance of an active *general supervision*, ranging over all crime of a professional or special nature throughout British India, by intercommunication and intelligence in every direction under direct report to the Government of India as its "consultative officer" in those regards, a designation officially assigned to me in a Government Resolution on the subject. Some examples of the crime thus investigated and brought to trial have been described at length in the Journal; but attention to a few further instances may be invited in this place to exemplify the cowardly and outrageously despicable practice adopted by those *Ooreah poisoners*, particularly in following the dreadful pursuit in Bengal at the time of these new inquiries shortly prior to the period under review.

The persons styled Kusbins (*ouvrières*,) form in India an exclusive institution, and represent as much a professional class, not driven to it, as in other countries, as any other workers in India whose occupations are followed from parent to child,

except that these cannot be said to pursue theirs so much by hereditary descent—for they seldom have offspring when not confined to secluded life—as by continuity sprung of adoption and rearing. For, perhaps, every individual Kusbin, reared as such, has been purchased when a child, or been kidnapped, or taken over from indigent parents or widowed mothers, and *brought up* to the profession. They are also commonly called Kunchun and Künchünnee, or “dancing women,” from their performing as such on public hire, or from being maintained in that capacity for festive occasions on the establishments of rajahs, bankers, and other wealthy natives. “Kunchun” signifies gold, which being, we may suppose, their price of hire, hence their *sobriquet*. A “*táifa*,” or *troupe* of such Nautch or dancing-women, is also generally included, from long custom, on the permanent establishments for ceremonial purposes of Hindoo temples, as may be noticed in sculptured representations of religious processions—“the singers going before, minstrels following after, with damsels in their midst”—notably in some friezes in the caves of Elephanta and Ellora;⁶ and there is, or used to be, a remark-

⁶ Many passages might be quoted from authors, descriptive of sculptures in *alto-relievo* of bayadères or “women of the temple,” “jocund trains of dancing girls,” dancing and singing “in measured steps and cadences” before the idol, while the priests performed pooja or worship; but the following from good Bishop Heber’s account of his visit to the cave temple of Kennery on the Island of Salsette adjoining Bombay, adds value to them all: “On the east side of the portico is a colossal statue of Buddha, with his hands raised in the attitude of benediction, and the screen which separates the vestibule from the temple is covered immediately above the dado, with a row of male and female figures,

able present example thereof in the establishment appertaining to a celebrated temple on an island on the Malabar coast off Goa. Barring their ever-clinging taint and consequent ill-repute, many of these persons are of refined habits in other respects;⁷ and individual members of their class have for such qualities, as the history of India tells (confining ourselves to it alone,) risen to the highest social positions and preferment, and commanded respect. For grace of demeanour, elegance in attire, and general attractiveness, perhaps the táifas of Rajpootanah, particularly those of Jesulmere and Bikaner, of whom some account will be found in the Journal (*vide* p. 175,) may be said to excel when "dancing," so wrongly to term their minuet glissades and graceful posture movements when performing before the assemblies of their

nearly naked but not indecent, and carved with considerable spirit, which apparently represent dancers." (*Heber's Journey*, vol. iii., p. 92.)

⁷ In his account of the *almal*, or dancing girls of Egypt, who in manners and habits have been stated to correspond exactly with the Nautch girls of India, Mons. Savary says: "The minds of these women are cultivated, their conversation agreeable; they speak their language with purity, and, habitually addicting themselves to poetry, learn the most winning and sonorous modes of expression." (Taken from *Mauvise's Indian Antiquities*, vol. v., p. 929.)

In Ferishta's account of the magnificence of the Hindoo temple of Somnath, on the coast of Kattyawar near Joonaghhur, at the period of its destruction by Mahmood of Ghuznee (wrongly, I think, declared to have carried away its very gates to his capital, rather than some portions of its idol, a *Lingum*,) we read, in Dow's translation of it, that "three hundred barbers (*náhwee*,) *five hundred dancing girls* and three hundred musicians (*sázinda*," were on the establishment of the Idol, and were subsisted from its endowments and the gifts of the numberless pilgrims to it.

princely employers.* I do not extend these observations to, or include in them the Cyprians to be seen promiscuously disporting in ill-assorted groups at windows and in balconies along the bazaar streets of Bombay, Calcutta, and other large towns, rather than to the secluded sisterhood; or apply them for any good looks to the ordinary squealing dancing-women of Madras or Bombay. Many individuals of the class are personally rich, and, unhappily for some, have the very common habit of tricking themselves out with jewellery and trinkets. They are in consequence, as may be supposed, easy victims when individually following their *kussub* or trade, in their own private dwellings.

The cowardly Ooreah poisoner was not slow to discover a way to appropriate booty so ready to hand. A miscreant named Gopal was a chief enactor in such miserably treacherous acts of robbery, not infrequently attended with the death of the unsuspecting and unguarded victims. There were several Ooreah gangs just then, consisting of from four to six and eight men, beating about in quest of bunneej, or a victim yielding booty. Three Ooreahs presented themselves at the dwelling of three such females living

* I once held in custody one such specimen. She had been transferred to me from the camp of the troublesome Queen-Mother, Baiza-Bace of Gwalior, widow of Maharajah Dowlut Rao Scindiah, charged with administering poison to a member of the reigning Scindiah's court. Nothing being proved against her she was remitted to the political officer, from whom I had received her, and she was thereupon taken back into the service of her royal mistress. She was troublesome as a *détenue*, and turned the heads of her native guards, and I was glad to get rid of her.

together, on the night preceding the great Ruth festival, or celebration of dragging about the ponderous "ruth," or car of the idol Juggernath, and proposed to stay with them till morning, when they would together go, as they proposed, to witness the procession. Being admitted to companionship, the men next prepared some curry. The women partook of it; and some curry which they themselves had cooked, under the same cooking-shed, the women handed to their visitors. They were unable to say which of the two meals had been drugged, for the women ate of both. An hour subsequently they felt "giddy and thirsty," and then remembered no more. On recovering consciousness, three days after, they found that a rouleau of Rs. 120, which they had buried under the floor of their room, together with the ornaments which they were wearing, had been robbed. This happened at Dum-Dum. They did not see these men again.

When Mr. Reily took up the case, and, on the evidence of an approver, who "belonged to the gang," arrested the three culprits, they were not only at once recognized by two of the women (one being dead,) but these claimed also a silver girdle which one of them wore on the occasion, and had now been found in the possession of one of the prisoners. The three accused men were thereupon successfully tried and sentenced to seven years' transportation.

Again, another woman of the same class was visited one evening at another place near Dum-

Dum. Living with her was a youth whom she called her son, who during the day-hours worked as an apprentice in a carpenter's shop. On leaving her, the visitors (there were two,) said they would come again soon. Two evenings subsequently they again appeared at her dwelling, and said they would have food there. They deputed the woman to buy the necessary things for making it. She returned, bringing milk and some of the coarsely-ground meal called choorah, and with these she cooked for them. They now persuaded her and the youth to eat some spiced sugar which they had with them and had previously medicated. Both partook of it. One of the Thugs thereupon stayed on, while the other pretended to depart, but only to lurk about with a third accomplice under the shadow of a plantain tree close outside the dwelling. Later on at night the hapless female became insensible. The three villains hereupon proceeded to deprive her person of the ornaments she was wearing, perceiving which, the lad, still somewhat conscious, seized one of them by the hand ; the fellow thereupon took up a brand from the hearth, and applied it to the boy's hand and arm—"he let go his hold and dropped insensible." The little house was then ransacked, the woman's ornaments appropriated, and the miscreants got away. Such was that miserable story.

When the case was taken up by Mr. Reily, and the culprits arrested, the lad had not wholly recovered his senses ; *he had become an idiot*—often one of the after effects of Datoora poisoning.* The

* The after effects of dhatura : (1) "Even when the victims

woman recognized the two men who had visited her, also some of her ornaments found in their

escape with their lives the effects of the poison taken by them, generally dhatura, are such that they seldom recover their former bodily vigour. One of those who gave evidence against the subsequently executed convict, Mootasuddee, had been a perfect cripple from the dose taken at that man's hands seven years previously! This has also been observed in other instances in other parts of the country." . . . "In one of Major Chamberlain's cases, the victims were unable to undergo fatigue or exposure to the sun, which before they could endure. One of them was scarcely able to articulate, his speech being like that of a man struck with paralysis; he had never left his bed and was wasting away; in others the sufferers had permanently lost their health, and though in some instances years had passed since they were poisoned, 'they had dragged through an existence of misery from constant failing health; one died and the rest were bequeathed the seeds of ill-health.'"—(Major Charles Hervey, General Superintendent Thuggee and Dacoitic Department, to Colonel H. M. Durand, C.B., Secretary to the Government of India, Foreign Department, No. 794, dated 15th September, 1863.)

(2) "Life generally is taken, or if the victims recover they mostly lose their health and their intellects; and in frequent cases there is no police detection. On the contrary, death, if reported at all, is ascribed to disease, suicide, or wild beasts; and if death is escaped silence is too often observed in order to avoid a charge of drunkenness or falsehood, or, if females should be the complainants, of in chastity or other taunt, at the sacrifice of the property which has been robbed, and of justice."—(Taken from Colonel Hervey's Report in the Home Department, No. 930, dated 13th September, 1865, para. 5.)

(3) "It is well known that persons suffering from the effects of dhatura do not regain full possession of their memory in the generality of instances for some days."—(Report on the proceedings of the Special Detective Department in Bengal for the year 1865.)

(4) "That the old crime of Thuggee by strangulation, has been superseded by that of poisoning, is, I believe, now generally admitted, or it would be admitted from the information presented by the statements now submitted, if former reports had not sufficiently established the fact; and it is only in continuation of my very earnest efforts for the suppression of the dreadful evil, that I have ventured to come up to Government with these proposals; an evil accomplished by secret means at once diabolical

possession. On their trial, however, the jury acquitted them, "although the judge had charged for conviction." But they were with better success found guilty in connection with the previous narrated case, and insufficiently sentenced to seven years' transportation.

Yet an instance : Four Ooreahs took lodgings at the residence in Shám Bazaar, near Calcutta, of another woman of like profession, of whom one named Gôpal, the man already alluded to, was a notorious and long a successful poisoner. He had been taken up now and again, charged with the crime, but had always managed to get released. These four persons lodged there for a month. On the occasion, shortly after they left, of the Sunkránth (an autumnal festival, when compliments are mutually exchanged among friends and relatives and minute coloured comfits, filled in tiny paper boxes, are distributed, also the dried leaves of a particular tree or shrub, the name of which has escaped me,) the woman prepared some sweetmeats and sent them to her late Ooreah lodgers, who a few days subsequently, sent her by the hands of one of their number, a quantity of

and cowardly, and which, if it should not be attended with the destruction of life in every case, the destruction thereof is so far contemplated, that the purpose being effected, namely, the robbery of the victim, it is of no concern to the perpetrator whether the man dies or not, his recovery being, on the other hand, often attended with the sacrifice of his intellect or of his bodily health ; and under such conditions I would humbly commend these statements to the consideration of the Government of India."—(Taken from a further Report from Colonel Hervey to the Secretary of the Government of India in the Home Department, No. 624, dated 1st August, 1868, para. 10.)

comfits in return. She ate of these, as did her "brother" and a small boy. "Shortly after this I felt giddy, my throat got dry, and I went to drink water. I recollect no further and I must have become insensible. But on my recovering my senses two days subsequently, (*jub hosh phir aya do din baad*,) I discovered I had been robbed of all my personal ornaments and of my money. My two fellow-sufferers did not remain unconscious so long. We never saw those Ooreahs again." On the arrest of these men by the special detective agency, they were fully recognized by the three poisoned persons. The man Gôpal upon this at once admitted not only this but some other authenticated cases of poisoning in which he had taken part. Yet the sitting magistrate discharged them all! Mr. Reily appealed to the Sessions Judge against the decision, who at once directed the trial of Gôpal the chief offender (the same man mentioned at p. 46,) and he was eventually sentenced in due form to the same short period of transportation as in the other case.

But the men who poisoned in Bengal were not all Ooreahs. They were of mixed classes, one successful gang of whom was headed by one Lákha, a Dosádh (a hardy class of men who served well in Clive's Sepoy ranks at Plassy.) He was a noted sirdár or leader, who, with his gang of nine or ten men of the same tribe, had long practised the crime with impunity, his beat being on the high road between Patna and Bhágulpore. Owing, however, to the trenchant inquiries carried on by the

special detective department in the neighbouring district of Moughyr, and thinking that vicinity too hot for him, he removed his men to a place called Párhoo, near Patna, making that point his head-centre. He had before this posted himself and men at Bhádrapoor and was there associated with another gang there also located, and conjointly with it, had committed a dacoity at a place in that neighbourhood called Cól-gong. From that gang he had now separated his own, and for two years had altogether evaded detection. He and some of his men were, however, at length discovered and arrested at the period I am writing of (close of 1866,) charged with being concerned in poisoning four Hindoo travellers on the road from Gya to Patna, three or four months previously. He hereupon offered his services as an approver; but being acquitted in a preliminary trial for poisoning a woman, her testimony in the case being discredited by the trying authority, he was again sent up charged with poisoning two other Kusbins shortly previously, at a place called Thoolseepore, and at the same time with the instance above adverted to of his varied occupation of dacoity at Cól-gong, on conviction whereof he was awarded transportation for seven years in each case, or for a period of fourteen years in all. This at the end of the year under review, but up to which period the several gangs of poisoners in those particular districts had remained untouched. Made over, on his proffer of services, to the special detective department, the man Lákha forthwith

narrated his criminal career, and by his means in the capacity of a formally admitted appover, several men of his own and the other quota were brought to trial, not successfully in every case, but sufficiently so to break up the gangs in that direction for a time.

Some observations here suggest themselves: The causes of failure in some instances in these trials, as described in the following quotation from the special Report of the operations under notice, are opportune to a consideration of the subject. They present a repetition of the difficulties often contended with throughout the experiences of the Thuggee suppression department, and perhaps the riper experience of the Gentlemen by whom they were offered, basing them as they probably did upon their conceptions of the teachings of the law of evidence their early minds had been influenced by, will lead them now to admit that views may be formed, and might have been by themselves, in investigations of the sort referred to, compatible enough with the dogmas of the law, to administer it conscientiously! Numerous deeply-dyed offenders have escaped punishment from strained views of the law of evidence, apart from a due consideration of the wider acceptation it was susceptible of, and of its purview or intention: or if any conviction followed, the same sympathizing tendency has resulted in awards of sentences wholly inadequate for the purposes of suppression—and yet the cry has ever been, notwithstanding, “Put down the miscreants,” “the safety of the community must be

paramount to every consideration"! The angle of incidence being equal to the angle of reflection, it might be reasoned, once adjust your view to its object and then work out the problem—once justify the aim and then measure your severity by the occasion for it. The law on the subject, if not too tenderly interpreted, is sufficient enough for its purposes when intelligently administered and there is no question of the integrity of the special measures adopted against the evil it purports to contend with:—"It may here be remarked that investigations founded on information furnished by prisoners are attended with great difficulty. First there is a strong prejudice against acting on statements made by a convicted felon; inexperienced magistrates, who have no practical knowledge of the criminal classes, are unreasonably sensitive on that point. In every country in the world the evidence of accomplices is made use of when a gang or association of criminals is sought to be destroyed. Such evidence, if corroborated, is always regarded as 'legal evidence,' and hundreds of criminals have been convicted and punished on similar evidence. But the prejudice is so strong, and the often repeated charges of torture and 'moral pressure' are so easily credited, that it is very difficult for a police officer, however anxious he may be to perform his duty, steadily to pursue the object he has in view. He is assailed on every side, and any judicial officer has it in his power to record very unpleasant remarks, which, however untrue and

unsupported by evidence, are, to say the least, exceedingly injurious. Again, poisoning cases generally do not come to light until after the lapse of a considerable period of time; the victims are generally travellers from different districts, and often from distant Provinces, who not only neglected at the time of the occurrence" (from fear of detention and other actuating alarms, palpable in the case of females,) "to give any information to the police, but are exceedingly unwilling to come forward and subject themselves to the harassment of a double prosecution before a magistrate and ultimately before the Court of Sessions. There is again the unwillingness of the authorities to credit statements of recognition after such a lapse of time." (*Taken from the Report of Mr. Reilly for 1866, of Poisoning in Bengal.*)¹

¹ P.S.—As I write, a dictum has been pronounced, *à propos* to this vexed subject, by sagacious Sir James Hannen, as President of the Special Parnell Commission. It was contended by Sir Henry James, in his admirable deliverances on the entire question of the long inquiry, to the effect that there was no rule of law which required the corroboration of evidence which should prevent the evidence given, being considered as credible testimony: "I submit to your Lordship, that, even if there were no corroboration of Mannion's testimony, his evidence should not be struck out on the ground that the principle of law which requires corroboration of the evidence of an accomplice does not apply in this case." Sir James Hannen: "I rather regard it as a principle of jurisprudence than a rule of law. Juries are strongly recommended not to act upon the uncorroborated evidence of an accomplice, but it has never been a rule of law. I may add that the corroboration required is only of the surrounding circumstances so as to lead up to a general presumption as to the truth of the evidence. It would be an absurdity to say that no evidence of an accomplice can be received unless corroborated by other independent testimony, because then there would be no need for an accomplice's evidence." Sir Henry James: "The rule has

Several similar cases in the direction of Patna and neighbouring districts had been reported to have recently taken place, and the special detective department was, at the close of the year under notice, hotly engaged in unravelling them. The following is a sample of the exploits of the convict Lákha, now enrolled as an approver. While located as above at Parthoo a traveller was decoyed to a garden enclosure for a while, it being supposed that he had money about him. Lákha, with three of his men, concertedly proceeded ahead, and was presently followed by two other members of the gang, accompanied by the stranger. Some sherbet was then prepared (the period being the month of Cheyt, or March-April,) which, having been medicated, was presented to the tired and thirsty man. Further on in the day's journey, the poison began to take effect. The potioned victim, feeling giddy and confused, expressed a wish to go into the village hard by which the road lay. As to do so would lose them

been regarded and spoken of as a rigid rule of law, and judges have directed juries that they ought not to act on uncorroborated statements."

Much to the same effect was a dictum delivered by Lord Coleridge, when he stated that "the necessity for the confirmation of an accomplice has been stated too strongly in some cases. It appears to me that even the testimony of an accomplice, though entirely unconfirmed, must go to the jury, accompanied, of course, by such recommendations as the judge in such cases would feel it his duty to make. If a witness be admissible at all, I have no right to withdraw his testimony from the consideration of the jury, and the law having admitted the evidence of an accomplice, it is the province of the jury to determine its value."—Mr. Justice Coleridge in the case of the Queen *versus* Andrews and another, tried at the Somerset Spring Assizes of 1845.)

the opportunity to rob him, the miscreants resolved to kill him then and there. They acted accordingly, by emasculating him in a barbarous manner, by a process by which no blood should be shed. After appropriating some 117 rupees found upon his person, they cast away the corpse into the river close by.

The inquiry into this case affords another example of the difficulties that attend such investigations. A man, certainly not one of the gang concerned in it, had been previously arrested on suspicion by the ordinary police on the spot (which it should be borne in mind, was not the special detective police,) and being tried for the murder mentioned in the text, was released. The record of the proceedings in that case indicated, on examination by the detective department which had now taken up the inquiry, that three local parties had testified in it that they had seen a man named Téluk, a local individual, and some others, throw a dead body into the river, and the village watchman that Téluk was the man who afterwards showed him the stranded corpse. This, though duly noted in the record of the previous proceedings, was not any evidence against the individual then under trial, but merely formed a digression so to term that casual statement. But on local inquiry by the detective police, it was ascertained that in the village it was a general belief that Téluk was privy to the disposal of the corpse into the river, and the investigating magistrate in the previous case of the acquitted man, had himself so far

credited the story as even to have summoned Têluk "for concealing evidence by making away with the body."

The man Lákha had, too, now narrated this murder among the other crimes he had confessed to before Mr. Reily. Têluk was thereupon taken into custody, and the case sent up to the sitting joint-magistrate, the same functionary who had inquired into the previous case. Lákha's evidence was taken by him accordingly, but he subsequently declared "he had done so under a mistake," and now gratuitously minuted a long explanation why the man Lákha should not be admitted as Queen's evidence. He re-examined the witnesses who had indeterminately deposed about the corpse in the previous investigation, declared the evidence untrustworthy because the man Têluk had been discharged on the acquittal of the previously arraigned individual, and urged that the several witnesses now produced (namely, the three persons and the village watchman, who had on the former occasion spoken to the part taken by Têluk in the disposal of the murdered man's body,) had from the fact of the acquittal of the man first tried (against whom, be it remembered, they had stated nothing,) been "apparently rejected as untrustworthy or even concocted evidence." This was his own illogical view of the circumstance, and he additionally "speculated on the motives which might have induced Lákha to confess!"

But, as aptly remarked in the Special Report of

these investigations into the crime of poisoning prevailing in Bengal, "It was not material to the case what were Lákha's motives in confessing. The real question was, whether the case was true or false. The corroborative information had been acted upon by the local magistrate in the first investigation, when upon that information he had summoned Téluk to answer for what had come out against himself. At that previous period no one avowedly suspected that Téluk was privy to the murder ; the impression was, that the man then on trial was the murderer, and it was not to be surprised at that the evidence of the village watchman and those three witnesses, should at the time be regarded as irrelevant, and therefore suspicious and inconsistent" (if it was so regarded, for to be sure, it had nothing to do with the guilt alleged against the man, an innocent one, then under trial :) for "the subsequent revelations of the man Lákha now threw a light" upon the previous unconformable evidence, and made it "perfectly consistent and truthful." It appeared to the detective department "that there was *prima facie* evidence against Téluk, sufficient to warrant his committal for trial; the joint Magistrate, however, thought otherwise, and released Téluk without making any fresh investigation into the case!"

Another case inquired into at this period met with similar results. Lákha and his fellows had lately drugged a Rajpoot travelling from Midnapore to Chuprah in Bengal. The man was bringing home some brass platters, which had belonged

to his deceased son, and had been made over to him by the police officer of Midnapore, where his son, who was a member of the police force, had died. When the traveller became unconscious from the effects of the drug administered to him, those utensils were appropriated by the culprits and handed over to the charge of the same Téluk, a member of the gang. On the latter being taken into custody for the murder last narrated, the detective police thought to search his dwelling-place, and in it a quantity of suspicious articles were found, among them those platters. These were at once claimed by the drugged traveller. The local police superintendent confirmed the statement of the approver that the previous owner of them had been a member of the local police when he died, and that the effects handed over to his father included a couple of brass "thálas" (platters.) Thus Lákha was confirmed in all "the surrounding circumstances" in this particular case also. But all to no purpose. The sitting joint Magistrate discharged Téluk in this case also. According to the special report submitted by the detective officer, the superintendent of the Midnapore police supplied a list of the property which had been made over to the deceased constable's father; that list includes two brass thálas. Two brass thálas were found in the prisoner's house, and they were recognized by the poisoned man (the deceased man's father,) as those he had been robbed of when drugged: "There was a great deal said about the impossibility" (the report

went on,) “of recognizing brass plates, but a platter which a native uses every day of his life, he will identify quite as readily as a gentleman will tell his hat or his gloves. Besides, in this instance the thálas were peculiar to the Midnapore district, where they were manufactured, and were not easily procured in Behàr, the district in which the crime was committed ; and further, the native sub-inspector of police, and two police constables of Midnapore, who had resided with the deceased constable to whom those utensils had belonged, and had daily used them, also clearly identified them. Add to all this, there was also the fact that this very poisoner Téluk was charged with the preceding murder, thus adding further corroboration to the direct evidence of the approver Lákha of his ‘ belonging ’ to a gang of professional poisoners engaged in poisoning.”

Other like acts of poisoning had been committed elsewhere during the year 1866, whether in Oudh, the North-West Provinces, the Punjab, Madras, Bombay and the Central Provinces, instances whereof will be found exemplified in the Journal; and at the very close of the period, a case was reported which was very pertinent to my contention for a regulation against the personal possession, however easily obtained, of poisonous drugs or minerals. It came from Etah, one of the districts of the North-Western Provinces in which the crime prevailed. A man was taken into custody at the end of the year, at a fair near Etah, upon whose person a “large quantity of the seed of the

black Dhatura" was discovered. He explained he gave it "as a medicine to sick cattle," an old ruse (*vide* vol. ii. pp. 55-56).² Taken before the

² "It will be further perceived that these statements also present some cases of the crime of poisoning in which the accused escaped conviction, although the poison reasonably believed to have been employed by him for criminal purposes, was found in his possession. Of this a remarkable instance will be found in the statement for 1866 under Etah in the North-Western Provinces. The prisoner in that case declared he had used the substance, which was dhatura, 'as medicine for sick cattle.' Others have similarly asserted that they were themselves in the habit of taking the drug. The device is a very common one. When those 'mysterious cases,' as they were called, occurred at Oonáo in Oudh in 1860-61, in which corpses were found on the high road with knotted strings fastened round the neck (of which I may here observe, there would seem to be a reappearance in the same neighbourhood as well as elsewhere,) under the impression that poisoners were probably the culprits who had first drugged their victims and then had tied on the cords in order to baffle detection, or in other words, to induce a belief that Thug stranglers had been at work in an unprofessional way, and not expert Thug poisoners, I suggested to magistrates to require the police to look out for men in the garb of religious mendicants who should put up at Serais, or other resting places, and to search their persons in view to the discovery of poison or other noxious substance upon some at least of them. Upon this a Byrágee (Hindoo mendicant,) as he pretended to be, was arrested on his return to Cawnpore, who, after a very short stay at that place, had been perceived to go over into Oudh across the adjacent Ganges, leaving behind him, however, a bundle composed seemingly of tattered clothes only, too miserable looking he thought, to excite any suspicion. Called upon to account for some seed of the dhatura found tied up in a corner of one of the old garments, he unhesitatingly declared that he used the drug as a medicine, and at once raised his hand as if to eat some of it on the spot. In this he was prevented by the sitting magistrate, who thereupon sent the man over to my assistant, Major Chamberlain, at that time located at Lucknow, where, on his making the same proposal, he was, in view to put him to the test, even permitted to do what he had offered. Nothing daunted, he forthwith swallowed some of the seed to the dismay of that officer. Insensibility had already partially set in before the usual antidotes could be applied. On his being restored to consciousness, however, further to disconcert beholders, he at once remon-

local magistrate, it was replied that "there was no law to detain the man." He came from Hattrass, a head-centre of professional poisoners. This case closed the series.

My apology for this protraction is, that I have supposed the account would elucidate the portions of my personal Journal in which the perpetration of such crimes is related, and serve to show that the duties of the Thuggee and Dacoitic department were of no ordinary character, and had to be persevered in and still carried on amid many difficulties, requiring both tact and temper to be contended with.

On the subject, however, of the desirability to extend the "approver system" to proceedings against criminals in the habit of committing "Thuggee by means of poison," it may here be

strated at the measures taken to revive him, declaring, as we may suppose the hashish eater would do, that 'he was just getting into the glory of the thing!' Transferred thereupon to myself, he disclosed to me a long list of acts of poisoning and of dacoity, both on land and river, in which he had taken part; and revealed too, among other like barbarities, that he was one of the infuriated band by whom Mr. St. George Tucker, of the Bengal Civil Service, was beset and finally murdered in his bungalow at Futtehpoore, on the outbreak of the Mutiny in 1857, and that he had even received a bullet in his leg, the scar of which he showed me, from the seldom erring rifle of that brave gentleman. I only revert to this anecdote in connection with the subject of the expediency of framing a law making it penal to be found to possess, without a license, the deleterious things commonly used by poisoners, such as I had ventured to propose for enactment in my letter to your address, No. 930, bearing date 13th September, 1865."—(Colonel Hervey, General Superintendent, to E. C. Bayley, Esq., Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department, No. 624, dated 1st August, 1866, paragraph 9.)

* These subjects, "the approver system" and "Thuggee by means of poison," will be made clearer to the understanding of them

stated, that the Government of India in the Foreign department, led by my repeated representations on

by the following notices thereof, viz., (1) Approvership : "The offer of a free pardon to the woman Brij-Bussia, as sanctioned by the Government North-Western Provinces, in the fourth paragraph of its secretary's letter to Mr. Court (Inspector-General Police, N.W.P.) you will perceive to be somewhat contrary to our practice. A prospect of eventual release generally leads the party to give only partial evidence, and the remission of the unexpired portion of a period of imprisonment so limited as eighteen months only, may lead the woman, I am afraid, to consider the boon incommensurate with the information she is able to impart. I should have preferred putting her upon her trial for her admissions to you (after they should have been authenticated,) the full penalty, death or transportation for life, being awarded on her conviction, and a conditional pardon then promised her, on her divulging to you every portion of her criminal career. But the orders of the local Government must, in this case, be strictly acted up to. In the case of other revelations it will be necessary for you to act otherwise. Criminals of such a class (professional poisoners,) moreover, when released, generally revert to their former evil practices, and it will be incumbent upon us to avert such a contingency in the cases of other persons whom it may be necessary to admit as approvers." (N.B.—This woman, admitted as Queen's evidence *quasi* approver, on a free pardon, was afterwards found out to be utterly untrustworthy.)

"It may happen, and frequently so, that a poisoner, sentenced to transportation for life, will, after conviction and such sentence, not only turn approver but be most valuable as such, although, before conviction, he strongly denied knowledge of accomplices. If, therefore, the 'approver system' be conceded, it will be more than ever expedient to urge a full sentence of punishment, and whenever you can obtain a full award, to offer conditional remission of sentence for information of accomplices, the approver, of course, remaining under surveillance for life, and receiving the necessaries of life at the cost of Government."—(Extracts from the Instructions of Major Charles Hervey, General Superintendent, to Captain J. T. Watson, District Superintendent of Police, N.W.P., placed on special duty at Benares under the guidance of the General Superintendent, letters dated 20th and 27th September, 1861.)

(2) Poisoning : "The one important fact has been established that a 'system of robbery by administration of poisonous drugs, practised throughout the country,' by gangs who follow it as a profession and who have their connections and associates in all

the subject, and perhaps bestirred by the frequent notices of it in the Press, at a later period-consulted

quarters. No crime can be more hateful. It has not its origin in passion, jealousy, hatred or revenge. It has for its object the unlawful acquisition of property by means which, though always endangering and not infrequently destroying life, are used with a cold-blooded deliberation and indifference as to consequences, which distinguishes its perpetrators as among the very worst and most dangerous of criminals."—(Taken from the Orders of the Government N.W.P. to Mr. Court, Inspector-General Police, North-Western Provinces, No. 753A, dated 13th September, 1863.)

P.S. 1891.—Mr. Court, C.B., of the Bengal Civil Service, lately deceased, was a very able and energetic public servant, who highly distinguished himself during the troublous times of the great Indian Mutiny. I had hoped he would have noticed and read these "Crime Records." *

Approvership: "You are herewith furnished with a copy of the conditional pardon under which you are able, through and with the intervention of any magistrate, to admit a Thug poisoner to be an 'approver.'"

"On any man desiring to become an approver, you should have him to record a full narrative of the whole of his criminal career, in which are detailed the dates (as near as possible,) and the circumstances of each act of crime, with a full list of his accomplices in each. He should be kept in strict separate confinement while recording this evidence.

"When by the references you would make to local authorities, for confirmation of the incidents detailed by him, you are satisfied with his trustworthiness, you should then commit him for trial, under sections 310 and 311 of the Indian Penal Code, on his own admissions supported with proofs of the actual occurrence of some of the crimes he has confessed to, and he should then plead guilty and put in the certificate of conditional pardon which has been given to him as above. If he should not plead guilty, he must stand the consequences, the certificate becoming, in such a case, null and void. But if he abides by his engagements to serve as an approver, and to go through the ordeal of trial, the execution of the sentence which shall be passed upon him on conviction, will then, as guaranteed in the said certificate, be held in abeyance while he continues to act with good faith.

"The man will thus be always in custody as an approver, and the best means will have been adopted for eliciting safe evidence from him against his accomplices."—(Colonel Hervey to Mr. Reilly,

* Mr. Bettington, of the Bombay Civil Service, Inspector-General of the Bombay Police, pre-deceased Mr. Court. He also strongly advocated my view of the crime of poisoning.

the various Administrations, as to the necessity for the introduction of the proposed measure; and that in the opinion of the majority of the provincial officers to whom the correspondence was circulated, it was not considered necessary to adopt it, because of the "infrequency" of the crime! There was no Court or Bettington among them! Possibly, too, a minute on the subject by the Legislative member of Council (the present Lord Hobhouse,) submitted in the *Home* Department, advocating the measure, was not among the annexures sent round with the reference. I had placed much reliance upon it, as it lent, I thought, considerable import to the question. This, soon after I had vacated office. The decision prevented the Thuggee department from taking that active part against the criminal class alluded to, which the use of the "approver system" had enabled it to carry on with so much success in its operations against the old crime of Thuggee, as well as against professional dacoity.⁴

District Superintendent of Bengal Police, on special duty under the guidance of the General Superintendent, No. 459, dated 20th March, 1865.)

"I am sorry to learn you have admitted Zalim, or any one, as 'Queen's evidence' only. My recent letter on the subject, No. 459, dated 20th instant, could not have yet reached you when you did so. Let me beg you not to do so again without reference to me. Such men only revert to the crime, and they give, moreover, but partial evidence, accusing only those they do not care for, and screening their friends."—(Colonel Hervey, General Superintendent, to Mr. Reilly as above, dated 26th May, 1865.)

"It would seem to have been lost sight of, that the suppression of "Thuggee by means of poison," was extended to the special department under the direct orders of the Home Government, addressed to the Government of India and forwarded to the

~~However~~ this may be, the advantage of the ~~advocated proposal~~, would seem to have been in a measure, confirmed nevertheless, not only by the revelations subsequently elicited from the inquiries instituted against an arch-poisoner named Shurruf-ooddeen, whose field was in the Punjab, and of whose misdeeds I had left a record, and from other like informations acquired after I had vacated office, but from continued reports, however rarely made, of its actual occurrence! ⁶ Isolated police action under ordinary procedure (as in cases of poisoning from malice, or the act of domestic treachery,) does not suffice to stamp out, which was my aim, the crime of poisoning for the purposes of robbery as a professional vocation. The prevalence of poisoning even at this date (1889,) may be gathered from a recent report from Dr. Lyons, analyst to the Government of Bombay, now made public. It refers, of course, only to such acts in the Island of Bombay; but I would affirm of it,

General Superintendent "for guidance," which therefore, *totidem verbis*, also extended to that office the approver system specially appertaining to it in its general operations against the professional classes.

⁶ Mr. Lambert, who officiated as General Superintendent, has, in his general report of the operations of the special department for the two years 1881-82, stated: "A large number of cases occur in which the complainant, rather than submit to the annoyance consequent on complaint," (as frequently represented, by myself,) "makes no report at all." N.B.—It is to be observed that this, the revelations of Shurruf-ooddeen, and the reports of the prevalence of the crime, by Doctors Mair and Lyons, are of dates subsequent to the delivered opinion as to its *infrequency* (noticed in the text,) which had deterred the Government of India from adopting the approver system against the criminals as had been proposed by me.

considered with what has gone before, *ex uno disce omnes*. For, as shown, Dr. Mair, Coroner for Madras, had on his part, intermediately also denounced the crime in that direction, repudiated as its existence to any appreciable degree had been there. That gentleman outspokenly asserted the prevalence of poisoning. His field of inquiry on the subject "extended to every part of India from which the necessary information was procurable." And "no wonder," he said, since "probably in no other part of the world, did greater facility exist for procuring poison either in the bazaars, or from gardens—arsenic, corrosive sublimate, opium, stramonium (dhátura,) and other deadly poisons, are openly sold in the bazaars in any quantity, the sellers being unrestrained by any license."

The following, then, is what Dr. Lyons is reported to have represented on the same subject now recently (1889.) The crime, he said, seemed to be on the increase, for while he had to deal in 1888, with 360 cases of poisoning in Bombay alone, he had only 282 cases in the preceding year of 1887; the general work of official analysis *had increased fivefold* since his first report on the subject in 1872 (the year preceding the termination of my tenure of office, followed as this was, it will be remembered, by the ineffectual reference addressed to the several administrations for opinion—*vide* p. 66). Some of this "enormous increase" was due, Dr. Lyons supposed, "to the increase in the criminal use of poisons," and it was noticeable "that metallic

poison was now more generally used.”* This was attributed to the ease with which poison generally was to be obtained in India, “there being practically no restriction on their sale.” In the large proportion of cases, the poisoner was not discovered: “A family sits down to a meal of rice which the members of it have themselves carefully washed, all are taken ill, and one dies; arsenious oxide in large quantities is detected in the platter, but the murderer is never discovered.” A case of this sort, of which there was a remarkable instance shortly before I left India, befalling an Indo-Portuguese family residing at Bandora, close to Bombay, would not, it should be explained, be taken to be one of professional poisoning, but would be included in the category of domestic treachery, of which some parallel instances were quoted by Dr. Lyons. So also cases like the following (an instance whereof took place among my own domestic servants, when the noxious ingredient made use of was powdered glass,) three similar examples were given by Dr. Lyons. In one, a man threw a pooree or small packet of pounded glass, into the family chekkie or hand-mill, in daily use for grinding rice and corn. In another, a woman pounded her coloured glass bangles and mixed the powder in the grain she was grinding for her husband’s food. In many cases the poisons were declared to have been traced

* I reported in 1861, that the drugs generally used by professional poisoners, were the seeds of dhatura or “stramonium,” the root of the kanyle or khurreeara (“oleander odorum,”) koochla or strychnine (“strychnos nux vomica,”) and sunkhya or arsenic, but chiefly the dhatura see l. — (Report to the Foreign Office, No. 556, dated 17th July, 1861, para. 15.)

to "sorcerers," as they were called (*wáidhs*, or vendors of quack medicines' being probably pointed to,) who always had a large stock of such drugs, "the bases of powerful alkaloids, of opium, *dhátura*, plumbago root, and various mercurial compounds." Through these vendors, of whose nefarious trade I had often reported, some examples whereof are related in the Journal, "poisons were easily procured." Dr. Lyons further showed that at the date of his report (1889,) poisoning was a "very common crime in India on account of these facilities," and that it was also one most difficult to discover.*

"A person desirous to obtain drugs for criminal purposes would, in the matter of any restriction on the sale of poisons, have no need to resort to the druggists' stall or the chemists' counter in a country where he was readily able to get what he wanted from the roots of trees and plants in jungle, garden, or the wayside; or, if wanting mineral poison, from *wáidhs*, or travelling quacks, who numerously roam the country, vending, unquestioned, every noxious thing; but he would have to bethink himself how to prevent his being discovered *to possess them* if it were made unlawful to do so. Such a measure, however easily it might often be evaded, would at least, have the effect of checking the crime of poisoning committed from malice, or for the purposes of robbery, or of procuring abortion; while those who required the drugs for medicinal or honest purposes, would suffer little from the mere inconvenience of having to seek the required permission to possess them."—(Colonel Hervey to the Home Office, No. 930, dated 13th September, 1865, para. 6.)

* "There is a great deal too much indifference shown to this subject by Government. It may be considered impolitic to stir it up and to draw attention to it, for the suspicion of the frequent use of poisons which are extremely difficult of detection and which are within reach of the poorest classes, is an exceedingly uncomfortable one. It is one of those disagreeable facts which we ignore as long as possible, and when forced to regard it, take refuge in incredulity. Certainly, if we are to be guided by reported cases, there are slender grounds for apprehension; for in Bengal, with

There were never any remonstrances from other Governments referring to the existence of even the old crime of Thuggee as an organized system, or, if any, they were seldom, and half-hearted—not sufficiently forcible to lead to their being acted upon. Certainly a General Order was published by a Commander-in-Chief in India, warning Sepoys proceeding to Hindustan on furlough, to be on their guard against strangers proposing to travel with them, and a few such other public notices, cautioning travellers against wily Thugs going up and down and about, with “glozing courtesy,” seeking whom to murder and plunder. Not that there were not occasionally some who brought the system under notice, the traveller Tavernier being one who did so before our time, but with no full knowledge of their practices.*

its population of thirty-seven millions, there are only twenty-one cases in 1864, twenty-two in 1865 and twenty-three in 1866. In Madras none !” (*Delhi Gazette*, October, 1868.) This should be compared with Dr. Mair’s report of the crime in Madras, quoted above, p. 68.

* P.S. 1891.—In lately researching through some old volumes of the *Asiatic Journal*, that repository of Eastern information, I have come upon an article dated 30th April, 1816, written by Mr. John Shakespear, “Superintendent of Police for the Western Provinces,” saying that knowledge of Thugs, although well-known of old to the natives of India themselves, was, in a manner, ignored; and this although a very exact description was given in the same paper, of the Budhuck dacoits and their *co-frères* (of whose excesses several examples have been narrated by me in the present work,) corresponding in every detail with the information subsequently acquired by the then future Thuggee department. Mr. Shakespear wrote: “Some scepticism still prevails regarding the existence of people designated Thugs. Persons have been apprehended, tried and convicted of highway robbery and murder, under circumstances similar to those which distinguish the crimes

Dr. Shaw, of the Madras Medical Service, was one of the earliest reporters of the system within the

of this description ascribed to the Thugs; but no instance has come to my knowledge of any individual having been convicted of highway robbery and murder against whom it has been established that he was a professed Thug, who earned a subsistence by the commission of this crime. The result leaves me little room for doubt that there are at present persons residing in the Company's territories, who practise this species of robbery as a profession. Various confessions in this office show that regular societies of these men have had existence, communicating with each other and making, at stated periods, a division of their spoil. The term 'Thug' is usually applied in the Western Provinces to persons who rob and murder travellers on the highways, either by poison or the application of the cord or knife.* The literal meaning, however, in its common acceptation, as given in the following familiar proverb, is 'villain,' 'rascal,' 'knave,' etc., which also is the signification applied to the term in Gilchrist's Dictionary, *Bhagulpur ka Bhagalia, Cahalgung ka Thug, Patna ka Dewala, teenon nim zai*, 'the Bhagulpur cheats, the Cahalgung knaves, and the Patna swindlers, are notorious.' They are known also by different names in other parts of the country."

* With the means employed by which to accomplish their ends every one is now well acquainted, namely, poison, the roomal or waist-cloth, or the cord (as in the famous neck-tie cases near Lucknow, alluded to in my Journal, or by Brinjārah Thugs with the lasso, as mentioned at p. 411, vol. ii.); but it being traditionally forbidden to Thugs to shed blood (to avoid even the abrasion of the skin,) as certain to bring them to discovery and condign punishment, with forfeiture of the protection of their tutelary deity Kallee, "the knife," supposed in the above extract to be also habitually used, was religiously shunned. Such instruments were seldom resorted to, except on occasions of dire necessity, according to our experiences, of which the following was an instance: A Thug recounted to me the murder by his gang of several men in a field of standing corn outside of the cantonments at Poonah. One of the *bhuttōtes*, or actual stranglers, was a new hand in that important office, and he had failed to strangle his man effectually. The unhappy victim rose to escape, and then entreated, implored, to be allowed his life—but one of the gang remorselessly slew him then and there with a sword. "How could you deny the poor fellow his chance, when so besought?" inquired I. "Sir, he became from that moment our most dangerous enemy," was his imperturbable reply!—(II.

period of British rule in India, and Mr. Shakespear, of the Civil Service, and Dr. Sherwood, on the Bengal establishments.* But, so far from creating any striking or lasting effect thereby, or from leaving any permanent recollection of it, or, as probable, from such documents being pigeon-holed, it may here be added, that on a memorable occasion, noticed I think in the Journal, a magistrate of an important district in Madras territory, reproved, and even sorely rebuked an intelligent subordinate serving magisterially under him at a distance from the Sahib's head-quarters, for intercepting a large number of very Thugs then set out upon one of their periodical "suffers," or expeditions of Thuggee, whom, from his own wider knowledge, that zealous native official knew to be Thugs. Set at large again at the British magistrate's dictum, abounding with invocations of the obligations of humanity and the sinfulness of infringing the sacred rights of the liberty of the King's lieges, they reverted to the crime, with, as some of the survivors informed me, greater zest in proportion to the period of their forced abstinence from it. It was not till the Government of India, awakened to the subject by my predecessor, the late Sir William Henry Sleeman, K.C.B., of the Bengal Army—till that one man rose from our midst to proclaim, *Times* of London-like, the ruffian crew, that the Governor-General of India, stirred to the soul by the ghastly revelations, perceived—that Lord William Bentinck, roused by a sense of his own awful responsibility, believed—and himself took

* See Sherwood's account of it in Art. iv. vol. xiii. of Asiatic Researches.

up the case of the long-suffering native community, appointed Sleeman himself (then a Bengal native Infantry Major, in civil charge of a district in the remote Sangor and Nerbudda territories,) to be "General Superintendent" of the operations he had himself proposed to be taken up for the suppression of the formidable association, and gave him *carte blanche* to carry out all his own suggestions, passed special laws suited to the occasion whereby to legalize his proceedings, and by inaugurating measures for putting down the fearful evil, earned for himself and grooved out that niche among Governor-Generals of India, which no reputation of his Predecessors in that high office, nor of his Successors, illustrious as they too have been, can displace him from in that one noble cause in which he so heartily had enlisted himself, and so steadfastly supported through every good or evil report, and whatever detraction—for the measures were often assailed—and acquired by so doing, and by prohibiting the burning of widows, that enduring fame which adds nobility to the distinguished family among whose annals is deposited that archive of the noblest achievement ever accomplished in behalf of the welfare of the people of India—that "one of the greatest of boons in the power of Government to confer upon the native community"—a compliment at a subsequent date officially directed from home to my own efforts following his example in a like cause.

That was the origin of the "approver system" now objected to. It prompted itself to my great

predecessor, as an emergent aid. *Non tali auxilio, nec defensoribus istis tempus eget*, was the apt quotation he applied to the exigency. Convinced of the necessity for it on the present occasion, and, as one of his assistants, and eventually his successor, always closely following his wise counsels, I took up the teaching, basing on my own part the recurring need for it upon the principle of *similia similibus*, whereby more effectually to efface from the record of crime in India, the continuing phase of the old crime of Thuggee by strangulation which my predecessor in the important office, had set his foot upon. It was but to resort to an old expedient—to set a thief to catch a thief! Without such extraneous aid, systematic crime cannot be effectually dealt with. Except by the timely adoption of it (urged by myself in a fully worked-out letter to the Editor of the *Times*, a document which was submitted to the notice of both the Home and the Irish Secretaries of the period,) the Phoenix Park assassins would not have been condemned. The error on that occasion was, that Government failed to charge themselves with the care and the *future* protection of the approver *James Carey*. His life was taken as a natural, and, in our experience, a sure consequence. According to our system, fully explained in the paper adverted to, he would have been homed and guarded for the rest of his lifetime—"with every indulgence compatible with his safe-keeping"—and not have been left to the tender mercies of the conspirators he had dared to expose.

There is a material difference between pardon as an approver, and pardon as an ordinary Queen's evidence. In the latter case the pardon is extended beforehand, that is, without occasion for any trial and conviction; the conditions of the pardon can be avoided and departed from, not strictly fulfilled, without discovery; crimes are fabricated or are fathered, to make it appear that the volunteered evidence is of great value; or crimes which have been committed, but of which the perpetrators are at large, are kept unrevealed, because of the certain vengeance the denouncement would call down upon the betrayer; and moreover, the pardoned man is set at liberty on the completion and upon the assumed truthfulness of the evidence he has chosen to give, and has limited himself to impart. Whereas, pardon as a regularly enrolled "approver," is held out to a criminal (as a general rule,) after he has been tried and convicted and sentence passed upon him—to be held in abeyance; the pardon is conditional on his concealing nothing; the respited sentence can be carried out if he fails in his compact as an approver; he is not set at liberty or eased from surveillance, and he is secured from the vengeance of his associates.¹

In regard then to the crime of poisoning for the

¹ "An approver set at large on the ruling of the Court of Trial, frequently applied to me for restoration or employment, as he was afraid of the vengeance of his tribe if he went back among his people (*vide* memo., vol. ii. pp. 174—75) If confessing prisoners, used as *quasi* approvers, escape the laws of the country, they are put to death or excommunicated by the laws of their association."—(Report from Colonel Hervey to the Foreign Office, No. 1526, dated 31st December, 1873, para. 16.)

purposes of robbery, it will be observed that the burden of my frequent representations ever was, that it was a secret crime, and—disquieting thought—that we knew not the real extent of it—how more widely spread it was than the police themselves or magistrates could have any correct idea of—that, as a general rule, it was only when death had been the result, that any report of its occurrence was to be expected or was made (in Native States not even then,²) and that in frequent instances, the true nature of the offence reported, or the organization of which it was the subject, was not even suspected.³ “Officers in one district may be dealing to the best of their ability with isolated facts, the true interpretation of which they may entirely miss from want of information as to what is occurring in neighbouring districts;” and it could only be in a central office, such as that over which I presided,

² In 1879 the General Superintendent of the period, one of my successors, reported: “The returns received from the Native States show only one case of professional poisoning. It is hard to believe that Native States enjoy such a complete immunity from a class of crime which prevails so widely in British territory.”—(Colonel Henderson’s General Report for 1878, dated 31st October, 1879, para. 4.)

³ In 1882 it was reported of the crime: “No crime presents greater difficulties to the police, or is more likely to pass unnoticed even in settled districts, than robbery by drugging. The victims are usually solitary travellers, whose death is attributed to other causes. The poisoner carries on his villainous avocation without much toil and with little personal risk. He runs less chance of detection in this than in any other walk of criminal life, and he often secures good plunder. The calling is said to possess peculiar fascinations for those who once adopt it. It seems therefore certain that the number of persons who fall victims in Native territory to that class of offence, must be annually very large.”—(Report for 1881 by Mr. Lambert, Officiating General Superintendent of the Thuggee and Dacoity Department.)

that a more extended view of it could be formed. That the crime is anything but extinct in India, or is infrequent, has, I think, been shown. It may not be certified that it does not exist to any appreciable extent. Secret associations, fence, and dissimulation, had, from the nature of my duties, been for many years my special study while in employment. They have continued to be my close observation in retirement. The known bears no comparison in such inquiries, with the dark and unfathomable unknown; but on the data of revealed occurrences, considered with the surrounding circumstances, and with the revelations proceeding from, or to be gathered from the enactors themselves, the frequency of what takes place, the probability of what may yet be committed, may, with tolerable accuracy, be shrewdly conjectured, or a proximate idea be founded thereof; and if the following quotation from one of my published reports, should be thought inapt with which to close the subject, my excuse for it will indulgently, I hope, be ascribed to that intense study, that I should have considered it applicable thereto in this place, and at the present date.

Writing of the crimes of Thuggee and Dacoity I submitted of them as follows:—"It has been stated, that in progress with the march of civilization is the march of crime. Where there were prosperity, abundance, and order, there suddenly, the existence has been discovered of some scheme for unlawfully sharing in that abundance, which defied all order. Once discovered, however, the

confederacy has, in European countries, been effectually destroyed. But in no country in the world in which the arts and sciences, and the appliances of human ingenuity have been the most called out, and wealth and prosperity increased, has the progress of civilization been disfigured by the contemporaneous existence of bands of plunderers by hereditary descent, however much new modes of malefaction might be extemporized or invented by ordinary offenders. We claim for India great progress, and every day produces some new project for its material improvement and development—few heeding the worm which destroys the gourd—the insecurity, fatal alike to life and property, of that humble part of the people who most need our protection and sympathy. For in India, we have to deal with criminal systems which have been the growth of ages, and with criminal deeds the depths of which are utterly inscrutable.”⁴

The object of these introductory pages, was to convey the busy round of the close of the preceding year (1866.) The business and the pleasures of the succeeding year, are recorded in the following personal Journal for 1867.

⁴ Quoted from a report from Colonel Charles Hervey, General Superintendent of the operations for the suppression of Thuggee and Dacoity, addressed to the Secretary to the Government of India, Foreign Department, No. 1160A, dated 30th November, 1869, para. final.

SOME RECORDS OF CRIME.

1867.

1st January, Tuesday, Jeypore.—Mid work and pleasure ! Of the former always a daily lot ; of the latter as much as can be had between whiles, mixing the one with the other. Of heavy office work there is at present, a cessation, for I am now out on tour acquiring information. Yesterday I inspected Captain Blair's office. He is my Assistant for the Rajpootanah States, concurrently with his substantive office of senior Assistant to the Agent Governor-General. I have no need of anxiety there, for James Blair is an excellent coadjutor and prompt in all things ; and he is besides, a good fellow and a great favourite with everyone. I have, since leaving the Viceroy's great Durbar at Agra, been travelling with the camp of Colonel Eden, the Agent Governor-General for Rajpootanah, and we are now encamped at Jeypore, close to the British Residency. Last night we danced the old year out, and this morning have been congratulating one another. All hail to the New Year ! Dálees, or trays of sweetmeats, fruits, and choice morsels, from the Palace and Court

officials, and from city bankers and men of position, have been pouring in upon Colonel Eden, and the members of his political staff, and myself, from an early hour, and the Residency verandah is also piled up with them—a fine time for our servants, chupprásees and followers, to whom these offerings mostly are passed. I accompanied Colonel Eden in his visit with the members of his staff, to the Maharajah's Mudressa, or "college," as the *school* was imposingly styled, Major Beynon, the Resident at this Court, being with us. The pupils were numerous but all were very backward, particularly the Thakoor class, composed of the sons of the native nobles. To encourage attendance and lend importance to the occasion, every boy received a prize of some nicely bound book, and every parent supposed his son had *won* it. Prize distributions after this manner are to be regretted. Easily acquired guerdons can scarcely temper wholesome emulation. From there we proceeded to pay formal visits to two principal Sirdárs.

Being allowed to confront my two Meena approvers with the prisoners in the local jail, I went at evening to superintend the proceedings. They claimed fourteen of the number as their associates in dacoities, whom they named, each approver separately giving his account of the man. In these examinations some local officials were openly charged with countenancing dacoitie by sheltering and shielding the criminals, and some of those present must have winced at the accusation.

At night we all dined at the Residency. The Maharajah came in while we were yet at table, and sat near Colonel Eden and the Resident, slightly withdrawn from the table itself. He did not, of course, partake of anything upon it, but one of his Rajpoot attendants occasionally served him with champagne in a silver saucer, from a private bottle tapped by one of those recent inventions for drawing from a corked bottle at pleasure without affecting the effervescence. His Highness expressed his readiness to be advised in his desire to suppress crime in his territories. He spoke some time with me on the subject, and said he altogether desired to meet the views of the "Lord Sahib" (Governor-General,) in that matter, but he feared that his own officers concealed much from him; and on my observing, *sotto voce*, that it was my fear that some of them connived with the dacoits and gave them shelter, he replied that I had quite apprehended his meaning, "that being the difficulty he laboured under," and he invited me always to communicate with him freely on such subjects, by writing privately to him of such derelictions; and, to serve as a blind to those about him, he suggested that I should at the same time write to him the usual ceremonial letters of friendship and inquiry.

Dinner at
the Resi-
dency.

Conversa-
tion with
the Maha-
rajah.

2nd January, Puckár, 16 miles.—We would have left Jeypoor at an early hour, but we had not yet been formally dismissed, although bidden "good-bye" last night, and etiquette compelled us to take studied leave or "rookhsut," the Rajpoots standing on such ceremonies with tenacity. So we drove in

Rookhsut.

The
Palace.

State to H.H.'s Palace this morning, and were received by the Maharajah under a beautifully embroidered canopy of cloth of gold and gold brocade, supported by delicately wrought gilded staves, erected in the principal audience hall of the Palace. The spacious compartment was richly carpeted throughout, its elaborate ceiling hung with chandeliers; and being open to the front like a verandah or gallery, its outer edge was protected by a balustrade of marble open-work extending between the numerous handsome pillars by which the terraced roof was sustained, a flight of marble stairs leading, Italian-like, into a fronting garden, crowded with plants and rare trees, where fountains and cascades played and sprayed the air. The Durbar, or audience, over, we were conducted by His Highness to his photographing apartment or studio, situated on another but lower terrace, where, assisted by his artist (Mr. Murray), the Maharajah himself photographed the whole of our party in a group, afterwards taking Colonel Eden and myself separately—all good enough specimens of his skill as an amateur, if to be judged from the negatives. He was much pleased with his performance. Mr. Murray has also charge and the management of a little steam vessel used by H.H. and the members of his family, for excursions on a small lake or enclosed tank situated within the Palace precincts. This tank was said to be very deep, and, begirt as it was with masonry unrelieved by any foliage, too carefully devoided of all weeds, and no water-fowl upon it, its water had a green

Photo-
graphed
by the
Maha-
rajah.

unwholesome appearance, to the significance of Alligators. which the presence in it of numerous alligators, added worse import. We had in a previous visit, been taken about the ill-omened mere in the steamer, and felt assured of the fatal result should anyone unhappily fall into it; for the ugly monsters were to be seen, with expanded jaws stretched above the water, and protruding snouts, or, whirling about their huge dark bodies beneath its surface, "now sprawl about, now under water dive." We were unable to appreciate the *pastime* of cruising about on a hemmed-in pond, thus awfully bedeviled—

"Their heads their shoulders touch—no neck betweeno
Is intercepted—and the back is green."

Being at length dismissed and garlands hung about our necks, we descended the Palace staircase thus strangely festooned, and ceremoniously drove to the Residency, from where, after a substantial *tiffin* and farewell visits to acquaintances among the little English colony, all more or less officially connected with the Residency, we finally left Jeypore and its rose-coloured habitations, midst booming of cannon fired from the lofty fortified heights in honour of Colonel Eden as Agent Governor-General. The day was cloudy, threatening a storm. Our way lay across a region covered with *reh*, a sort of carbonate of soda exuding from the earth, and from which soap is abundantly manufactured by the inhabitants. Our postilions had to urge their well-accustomed team over much heavy sand, directly we had passed over the very short span of macadamized road as yet constructed

by the Maharajah from his capital, so that we reached our encampment at Puchár by about 5 p.m. only; and there a well-served dinner awaited us. We are the guests of Colonel Eden, and his arrangements for us all, are on a most liberal scale—or rather on no scale at all, everything supplied being in profusion.

3rd January, Jólmere, 8 miles.—A short drive accomplished before breakfast. The drags supplied to us by the Durbar, in which we journey, have a liveried rider upon each of the six horses forming the team, a wooden yoke in ox fashion being harnessed across the shoulders of each pair. The pace is good, withal the heavy sand. Our way again for the most part lay along low damp ground covered with the same *reh*, in such quantity as to give it the appearance of fallen snow. Thus plentifully yielded, it is gathered and taken to a soap manufactory near Jeypore. The *saboon* or soap made from it, is of a fine white appearance, and is sold in bars to be seen piled up at every stall in the City. We passed by the Fort of Kaléj, which, and a similar fort composed of tall circular towers nearer our camp here, are situated on rocky eminences dominating the country. The day was again overcast. At evening we went out with our guns and brought home some partridges.

Our Camp. Our camp is very precisely pitched, and presents a neat and compact mass of white canvas, the Union Jack floating in its centre. Colonel Eden's tents form the frontage, my own are pitched at right angles to his on one side, the tents of his

several political Assistants on the other; sentries pace by a flag-staff erected in the interior space thus formed, our servants' "soldárees," cooking ground, &c., in order occupying the rear. The Agent's escort comprises a company of the "Meenah Regiment" from Deolee, and a large detachment of Irregular Horse from the "Erinpoora Field Force," these local troops, raised for special service in Rajpootanah, being under his own direct orders. The Meena Infantry wear dark tunics and scarlet overalls, and look well; the Irregular Horse are clothed in green uniforms or "ulkalugs," and red turbans, and jack-boots. The escort has a distinct encampment close by our own tents, the "Meenas" being quartered on our front. A posse of horsemen, roughly accoutred, also accompanies us, supplied by the local ruler. Wakeels or Ambassadors, so here to call them, representing the eighteen States that form the Rajpootanah principalities, one from each, are also in attendance on the British Representative, and they daily wait on Colonel Eden when officially occupied in his summecanah or audience canopy, for he is in constant communication with all the chieftains of the extensive territory. Then there is also the encampment of the elephants, camels and cattle in our train, attended by their numerous keepers, each in his national costume; and last, though not least, the important-looking outriders of the royal drags placed at our disposal, dressed in green and red liveries, booted and spurred, and got up, *cap-à-pie*, in jockey style—this cattle camp,

forming not the meanest picturesque group of the whole scene. The entire encampment and all arrangements connected with it, are under the direct orders and management of Captain James Blair, who, as the chief Assistant of Colonel Eden, is his right-hand man in all things, and his chief Secretary besides in all his official business connected with the Agency. He is also, as I have said, an Assistant to myself for the Thuggee and Dacoitie department in Rajpootanah—a prime favourite with everyone, and of remarkable intelligence.

The
Sámhur
Salt Lake.

4th January, Sámhur, 16 miles.—Our Camp at this place is pitched near the bank of the famous inland sheet of salt water, commonly called the “Sámhur Lake.” This remarkable expanse of dead water, has the appearance of a vast sheet of silver, and the piles of salt gathered everywhere about its margin, from their constantly encrusting surface, and arranged in regular succession, look as if the place were occupied by some large encampment. It is from here chiefly that Brinjárah, or here more correctly to be called Lumbánée or Lávánée, traders (described in previous journals,) lade their numerous pack bullocks with salt, and convey it into the countries not accessible from the sea coasts. The revenue thus obtained is considerable, but it has to be divided, the lake being the joint possession of the rulers of Jodhpore and Jeypore, their territories mutually terminating at its shores. We visited the Salt Pans, and from a jetty, viewed with wonde

the encrustations developed in the bed of the lake. We wondered particularly on being shown some beautiful specimens of crystallization, produced by mere immersion in the brine of skeleton shapes of musjids or other buildings, however elaborate in detail, which, on being taken out after a few hours, present fairy-like structures of crystal, the indurated brine cohering to every part of the dipped framework. There are several legends regarding the formation of this Lake; the following seems to be the accepted account among the people of the spot, and the myth certainly figured forth the productive wealth of it, past, present, or future. I give it as narrated to me. In the time of Prithee Raj, the powerful Hindoo sovereign who ruled over the whole of Hindostan until supplanted by Kootub-o-deen at Delhi, when the Hindoo dynasty terminated, a cowherd lost a cow in this neighbourhood. He sought the several pastures and eventually traced the lost animal to the hut of a Byrajee, or Hindoo ascetic, located near a small temple dedicated to their goddess Davee, which stands to the present day on a low hill projecting into the lake, where he beheld the cow *milking herself* of her own will, into the lōta or brass drinking-vessel which belonged to the local devotee! The latter hereupon apprised him that for this the Davee would bestow a blessing upon him, on his performing "durshun" or worship at her shrine. The man obeyed; whereupon he was required by the Oracle to ride the horse which was suddenly provided him, a distance of twelve

The
Legend of
the Sām-
bhar Salt
Lake.

koss or twenty-four miles. If he did not look back as he rode, the plain he coursed over should be covered with silver and be his property; but otherwise, with "kutchee" or undeveloped silver only. The country was at that time dense jungle, and it happened that as the cowherd had nearly arrived at the end of his bidden ride, his pugree, or turban, got entangled in the branch of a tree, and he looked back in order to extricate and gather in its loosened folds. For doing this he was intermed from the deity, when he rode back, the forfeit must be imposed. Whereupon the distance covered by his ride became a lake of shallow water, covered over as though with a sheeting of silver, but in reality of crystallized salt only, but which, imparted the augur, if properly worked, "would be converted into silver," that is, would yield money. But it was not until one Manick Rae, the "Soobah" or deputy on the part of the ruling government for this distant region, had visited the spot, that its profitable capacity was discovered and turned to account. Some said that Manick Rae was the name of the cowherd himself,¹ and that the "Soobah" was the collector and governor of the Delhi Emperor for the District of Muthra, who got himself transferred to Sámbehur when he

¹ The story is somewhat involved. Manick Ráe was, according to Tod, a Chóhan Prince, descended from the shepherd kings of Páli, and by caste a goat-herd. He was the chieftain of the Mohils (the people of that region,) and held rule over 1440 villages. He flourished in the beginning of the fifteenth century of our era, and stoutly opposed the invasion of Mahmood of Guzni when proceeding to despoil Somnáth on the Guzzerat coast. (Tod's *Rajasthan*, vol. i. pp. 96, 627, 775.)

became aware how profitably the lake might be worked. He probably farmed it from the owner, whoever he was, and obtained an hereditary right to do so. The present Canoongo, or tax-gatherer of Sámhbhur, is said to be a lineal descendant of the wise Soobah, but the intermediate descendants must have been spendthrifts, for the man is declared to be very poor, and he quite looks it. From the above it is to be conjectured that the lake is of comparatively recent formation. The tradition should have carried it, I think, to a remoter origin. The soil is impregnated with saline matter, and there would seem to be a stratum of it, which similarly crops up at other spots in these tracts, as at Deedwanah, Puchhoodra, Feelodi, and other brine-laid tals or dips, where salt is also formed and similarly carried away. The waters collect in the shallow basin formed by the surrounding region, and getting thereby *seasoned*, are soon converted into brine, the sun quickly terminating the crystallization of it. The two joint Rajahs share the revenue thus derived. The portion appertaining to the Jeypore ruler, is estimated at three lakhs of rupees per annum, but the persons to whom he farms the produce, make a great deal more out of the commodity. The price of the salt at the shore of the lake, is as low as only half a rupee the maund, or say, a shilling for eighty pounds of salt. But a transit duty of four and a half rupees is charged upon every "bórah" or sack measure of the substance, and each bórah is equal to twelve bullock loads. This is the duty on

Inland
Salt
Supply.

salt imported into Jeypore territory. It is not carried into contiguous Jodhpore limits, as that country has its own salt deposits, as at Deedwanah and Páli. The sovereign of the latter territory, merely has a lien on the revenue; his functionaries do not administer it. But when the salt is conveyed to other regions, as it indeed largely is, a further transit duty is levied, of eleven rupees the "bórah" if taken into British territory, of eight rupees if taken into Jhánsi, Bendlekund, and other Central Indian states; and of no more than five rupees if conveyed to Kôtah or Boondee territory. The reason for this partiality in respect to the latter two States, does not appear, except that it pleased the old Ruler of the period so to direct it. When the salt is passed through the great Salt Custom Hedge that now demarks the revenue line for some hundreds of miles along the frontier of British territory (a very ineffectual arrangement, the hedge being repeatedly broken through, and it is moreover maintained at great expense), an additional duty of three rupees the maund of eighty pounds is charged on the export. Thus the bôrah which, at the lake, cost only eighteen rupees, swells to 240 rupees when delivered at Agra, the price of salt there being six rupees the seer of two pounds. Each pack bullock carries about three maunds, and the "carriers" are, mostly, the aforesaid Brinjarahs, called also Lawáneas, so designated from being the carriers of both grain or birrinj, and salt or láwa, or lowu. They are a remarkable race and visit the lake, from the

Brin-
jarahs,
alias
Lawáneas
or Lum-
háneas.

most distant regions, with immense droves of pack bullocks, bringing grain and taking away salt. Their animals may be seen tethered in hundreds on the wide shores of the extensive lake, each tándah or company of their sort, being camped, under a distinct Naik or headman, in the centre of the drove appertaining to it, with their bullock packs or panniers neatly collected in piles of hundreds in their midst. In the daytime, when halted, their cattle are taken out to pasture wherever pasture may be obtained, tended by the fewest men, often mere lads, and not infrequently by girls ; at evening they are driven home, when a piece of oil-cake is given to each animal, called to by name, and it is curious to watch the process, how well each animal knows its name and waits expectantly for its turn to be called. At night the bullocks are tethered by means of a rope passed round their front feet and entwined with another rope fixed to the ground with strong stakes. They are picketed in this manner with their heads turned inwards, in a circle round the resting-place of their owners in their midst, and fires are kept burning throughout the night to scare away tigers or other beasts of prey. I have come upon the encampments of these roving people, in the wildest jungles, or threading their way with their long straggling lines of laden cattle through the most intricate ground, whether of rock, forest, sand-hills, or marsh, and have been quite fascinated by the strangeness of their manner and their quaint wild ways. I have had occasion

to report upon their singular habits, not only as grain and salt carriers, which is their ostensible, and, to speak fairly, the sole occupation of the many, but also as dacoits, and often as kidnappers of children, a common practice among them, and for which their roving habits and the very long distances to which they travel, offer many facilities. The rainy season compels them to pull up for several months together, and they may then be found encamped on the outskirts of jungles accessible to some town or market, more generally, however, in the districts known as the Berárs, where they largely congregate. "Berár" signifies an encampment or halting ground, and the region indicated, so convenient as a midway abiding-place to people accustomed to roam distantly in every direction as is the habit of these traders, became, no doubt, so designated from their custom to settle there for the rainy season. When so temporarily located, unoccupied, it is their wont to gather fire-wood for disposal in the neighbouring markets. On an occasion of my arresting a batch of these men in a tándah located at the verge of a jungly tract on the frontier of Shorapoor-Bedur, for a bad dacoitie attended with murder and wounding, then recently committed at a place called Gudduc, in the southern Mahratta country, several years ago, the deed of a mixed gang of Khunjurs and Lumbanees under a celebrated leader of the former tribe, one of the Lumbanee quota, in his defence, took off his pugree, and baring his scarred bald head, remonstrated against the accusation, declaring that he

had served with the pack bullocks that conveyed grain for "Wesley Sahib," in his early campaigns in those regions (meaning the Duke of Wellington,) and that his head had got thus blurred by carrying loads of fire-wood during the rains—how could he possibly have been or be a dacoit? Strangely enough, the sly old man had assumed the name of my great predecessor—he gave it as "Slee-man!" He was convicted.

The salt yielded by the Sámdbhur Lake is also collected at Nówah, a town on the other shore of the basin, and these two are the principal emporiums of the deposit; but there are some other spots in the same line of country where it is produced. When taken to Kotah, Boondée, and the districts in that direction, the carrier-train has to pass through the intervening slip of territory lying within the principality of Kishengur, the Ruler whereof derives a considerable revenue from the transit duties he, in his turn, imposes upon the commodity. That, indeed, may be said to form his only income, and he is consequently very much opposed to any project of a railway passing through his domains, such as now lately proposed; for the salt carried away by railway from Sámdbhur, would pass through his territory without breaking bulk, and this would occasion him serious loss. But he is willing to concede the point if adequately compensated, and the restoration to him of some villages which formerly belonged to his State, but are now in Jeypore territory, would, it is thought, amply reimburse him.

5th January, Sámdbhur.—We halt here to-day. The town of Sámdbhur is curiously situated on the lake's margin, as though some town on a sea-board, and has a substantial appearance, from its houses being chiefly composed of square towers of stone—tower growing out of tower. Stretching behind it is an undulating plain of low sand-hills, interspersed with cultivated spots of wheat and barley, and protected from the encroachment of sand by mud walls. These patches of ground are irrigated from pools, by the lever process so common in Madras and Mysore, except that here the lever is depressed into the water by the cultivator, who stands upon a stage below it made of packed straw, pulling a rope with a weight attached to its opposite end. The inhabitants are chiefly Mohammedan Patháns. They look sleek and well to do. There were birds of sorts in the cultivation. I bagged a curlew and a fine grey duck. A Colonel Morrison was a long time political resident at Sámdbhur. He planted the present avenue of trees close beyond the town; and a road that passes by it, but which is now covered with heavy sand, was also constructed by him. The bungalow, too, which he built and resided in, is also a heap of ruins. He is affectionately talked of by the people. Our tents were "bushed" at night against the portending storm.

6th January, Moománah, 10 miles.—We moved here this morning and are pitched on a sun-baked bed or flat, where rain would be a calamity. My European clerk brought in a brace of fine large

grouse. The Brinjárahs had not yet assembled at Sámrbhur in any large numbers, the season for their coming being yet early; but our detectives have been able to learn of the routes and directions likely to be taken by some of their principal Naiks or leaders during the season.

7th January, Roopnuggur, or Roopna-Ghūr, 10 miles.—Our route lay by Murwur, a fortress on a hill, where our team changed horses. The Thakoor residing in this stronghold invited us to go up and look at it, but we wished to get on. As we approached Roopnuggur (or, the Silver City,) we were met by the Rajah of Kishengur, in whose territory it is situated, attended by the usual following of bard, conch-blower, nuggárchí or kettle-drummer, sirdárs, horsemen, and people of sorts. He was mounted on a superb old elephant, the gift of Lord Ellenborough, the howdah and trappings of which were richly decorated. Colonel Eden and myself were seated upon an elephant, and his assistants on horseback, for we got out of our travelling carriage at the confines of the territory near the appointed spot of the meeting. The salutations and dusta-bazee or shaking of hands, an awkward process from across the tops of elephants, completed in due form, the Rajah escorted us to our ready-pitched camp, where he left us. This ceremony of *peshwáze* or meeting and safe conduct on State occasions, is attended to with much etiquette, and is considered indispensable. After we had breakfasted we were accompanied by the Rajah, numerously attended, to a vast undu-

Hog
Hunting.

lating plain. A host of his people, with shouts and matchlock shots, and noise of drums, beat through a cluster of low stony hills beyond it, and turned out several wild hogs, which gave the adequately mounted among us some sport. These came back from the chase with shivered spears, and Blair was twice thrown—but three fine hog were slain. The Rajah and his attendants accompanied the hunt on horseback, and freely used their swords when opportunity offered. Eden and I looked on from our elephant. By doles of grain occasionally thrown down, wild boar are induced to cling to these hills, as affording ready retreat; and being thus preserved, they are always to hand for sport. The Rajpoots eat the wild boar with delight, but foreswear a sow.

The
Mahratte
Invasion.

8th January, *Roopnuggur*.—We have halted here at the Maharajah's request, and commenced the day by paying him the customary ceremonial visit at his palace in the fort. He is a timid-looking man, with a girlish cast of countenance. His attendant Thakoors or Barons, and their retainers, were clean and well dressed, and seemed contented,—fine, healthy-looking fellows, every one of them, with their long black whiskers and turned-up moustaches fastened behind their ears in truculent Rajpoot fashion. We were shown over the palace buildings. Standing out from about the centre of the fort, is a round tower, lofty, and of substantial formation. This was the citadel, and its walls bore the marks of cannon-shot received in a siege during the invasion of the country by the

Mahrattas. Máhdajee Scindiah aspired to conquer the whole of Rajpootanah. He succeeded in wresting several strips of territory, but on the occasion referred to, he had come to the assistance of the Ruler of Kishengur, who had been dispossessed of Roopnuggur and another fortified tower, by the Ruler of Joudhpore, whom Máhdajee now deprived of both places and restored them to Kishengur.

Later in the day we were taken to and posted at an old tower situated in a gorge between two brown and barren hills beyond the plain, while a number of men beat up the ravines on either side. Several wild hog rushed along the rugged hill sides near by us. We shot down six and a hyena. This looks like the sin of killing a fox, but "the boar out of the wood," and "the wild beast of the field," devastate, and it becomes a necessity to keep them down, particularly where, as here, cultivation is precarious and scanty.

9th January, Mukránah, 17 miles.—I left Colonel Eden's hospitable camp after dinner yesterday, and travelled all night to this place in my bullock cart. The night was cold and dark, and the way wild and lonely. My escort of some Marwar horsemen left me while yet it was dark, at Purbutsir, their extreme limit, and I went on attended by a couple of my own Nujjees. We had to be on the alert, this being a robber-infested track. Reached Mukránah just at dawn. Not expecting me at so very early an hour, my people had on their own arrival there with my camp,

thrown themselves down then and there, and were fast asleep, with the baggage lying about the halting ground in very incautious disorder, the kulláshees, or tent pitchers, alone being occupied erecting my tents by flambeau light. After some readily-made tea, I was visited, early as it was, by the town worthies with an offering, laid out upon a tray, of marble cups and saucers and a couple of hollow marble swans of local manufacture. They conducted me to the celebrated quarries of the spot. These excavations had yielded marble from long date and were much used in the time of the Emperor Shah Jehán. No "Sahib" had visited the spot for twelve or more years, so that I was quite thronged by the curious inhabitants, who, men and children, pressed round about me. Mukránah is chiefly peopled by a race of Mahomedans settled here from the time the marble vein was first opened in the reign, it was said, of the great Akhbar Shah. An unfinished "Mahádeo," or Priapus, of huge dimensions, hewn out of an immense block of white marble, was pointed to standing on the edge of an ancient quarry. It was related of it that Akhbar had ordered it to be sculptured at the persuasion of a Jôgee or Hindoo devotee of the Kán-phutta or "split-ear" sect (so-called from their habit of slitting or nicking their ears,) whose disciple that monarch had all but become. "When you have a Mahádeo made from the marble pits in Marwár, and your ears have been betokened like ours, I will then initiate you into our rites." The emperor postponed the test

The
Marble
Quarries
at Muk-
ránah.

Un-
finished
Priapus.

as to his ears until the projected Mahádeo should at least be completed. Well-known for religious tolerance, for he was indeed by birth half Hindoo, his mother being a Rajpootani princess, it was feared by his followers he might be drawn away from the "true faith." He was born during his father Hoomayoon's disastrous flight across these very desert regions. The birth took place at Oomerkote, a desert fort on the confines of Scind, beyond the sandy wastes of Múrwár, whither Hoomayoon sought refuge and with difficulty had reached with his worn-out and reduced retinue and pregnant Rajpoot wife. For the ruler of Oomerkote was her father. A Mahomedan saint of great repute, who was believed to be able to do a great deal by merely soliciting permission from the Almighty, undertook to save Akhbar from the threatened apostasy. The story narrated to me, went, that Akhbar was one day after this, seated with this saint and the said Jôgee, at a Mündur or Hindoo fane situated on the bank of the Jumna at old Delhi, at a point from which the river had receded. The two holy men were disputing their respective talismanic powers: "Can you make water reappear at this temple?" tauntingly inquired the Hindoo. "Yes, God be praised," rejoined Islam, who thereupon invoked a blessing, and, by some declared necromantic process, obtained the immediate presence of a mirage right in front of the flight of stone steps which led up to the Mündur from the bed of the receded river. It looked to the astonished emperor and the startled Jôgee, like a sheet

Akhbar
and the
Jôgee.

of real water. "You can swim, of course?" exultingly exclaimed the Fucqueer. "Oh! yes," replied the ascetic, glad of the opportunity to escape, by the suggested expedient, the dilemma of his discomfiture; and he thereupon leapt from the terrace into the empty space, "believing it to be water," and was killed. Akhbar upon this decided to cling to his faith: "And thus the Mahadeo remains unfinished to the present day," concluded the narrator. The vein that yields the best marble, lies under a ridge that runs by the little town. The irregular upheaval rises about twenty-five feet above the usual surface of the ground and extends for about six miles with an average basal width of twenty feet. Underneath it the marble streak is traced along a continuous fissure that threads the sandstone formation in which it is imbedded. The marble thus developed is of the purest white, except where occasionally mottled with pink. The latter specimen is not much appreciated by the quarriers. Some cups roughly formed out of the rock by villagers of the locality had been exhibited to Akhbár, and it was under the orders thereupon of that monarch, that the vein was first regularly worked. His grandson, the Emperor Shah Jehán, had all the marble of which the Táj at Agra is so beautifully composed, brought from these very quarries. But while the excavations for the requirements of the Táj were going on, one of the quarries fell in, burying many workmen. "One hundred and forty pairs of shoes were counted at the quarry's edge," said my informant, the vener-

able proprietor of one of the excavations, "and, as many of the quarriers worked with their shoes on, we are sure that a great many more persons must have been buried alive on this occasion." The sides of the pit where this disaster is traditioned to have occurred, had become very black from age and disuse—for that particular quarry was forsaken ever after. The vein is let out much in the same way as permission to dig for gold is obtained at the "diggings" in Australia, but at a very moderate rate, about fifteen rupees only being charged on a length of about 100 yards of vein; and this, not for any stated period, nor during the contractor's lifetime, but for always, the right descending, like an heir-loom, from father to son. Some of the blocks are of immense size, obtained from the vein by blasting when resisting ordinary quarrying. Such large blocks are sawn into slabs or into smaller blocks on the spot, and are then either transported on carts to Jeypore, Agra, or other distant places; or the different parts of the structures for which they have been requisitioned, are fashioned and prepared at Mukránah itself, if not on the quarry's ground-floor. Thus in an enclosed space outside of the town, a large number of workmen were employed in putting together the cupola of a chuttree, a beautiful species of cenotaph, which had been bespoken for erection at Jábra-Puthun, an important town in Rajpootanah, a hundred and more miles distant. The contract for this work was a sum of no more than 13,000 rupees, say

Local
Marble
Work.

1300l., and the men employed had been engaged nearly an entire year in sculpturing and shaping the different parts of the projected edifice, the various corresponding parts of it being carefully marked and numbered. In another enclosure lay the slabs and other limbs, all more or less finished, intended for a small palace ordered by the late Begum of Bhôpal; but the masons had lately ceased working at it, the present Begum having intimated that she had now no money to pay for it. So also close under the ridge, embedded in sand, lay panelings and the prepared complements of another fine edifice ordered by the late Rajah of Joudhpoor, but which his successor, the present ruler, did not care to have completed. Many of the carvings of this unfinished structure were a good deal defaced from other blocks being dragged by and even over them. The labour had been in vain. For a fine table of a single slab of the purest white marble, supported by a highly wrought marble pedestal, I was asked no more than 150 rupees (15l.,) carriage (150 miles,) included. But the cups, plates, and small articles made here from the marble, are not of good form, being thick and heavy. The workmen both quarry the marble and sculpture it. They are descended from a colony of professional stone-cutters from Agra, where such masons excel to the present day, translated here by Akhbâr, and are called both Sungturrâsh and Sillâwut—synonymous terms, signifying quarryman and stonemason; but the ordinary lapidary is also called sungturrâsh, a

patient and clever race whom I have often employed in perseveringly slicing and polishing pebbles brought home by me from nullahs and river beds. These artificers are in religion Mahomedans, and form an industrious community. Their male children assist their elders in polishing and such other less laborious toil. But although seemingly a thriving people, they have a needy appearance, being poorly clad and ill-conditioned. The Ruler of Jodhpoor, in whose territory the plain lies, derives a profitable revenue from these quarries; but he is not unreasonable in his exactions, for the standard measure established by Shah Jehán is still adhered to, this being a cube of one biswah (equal to one and a half inch, or, more correctly, to one inch and five and a half eighths,) representing one pow-bhūr, or a quarter of a seer (half a pound;) or in other words, the "pow-bhūr," represented by the cube, is taken to be equal in weight to twenty tolas, or ounces, eighty tolas being equal here to one seer or two pounds avoirdupois. Twenty biswas long by twenty broad and one deep, thus form the standard weight of two and a half maunds, or 100 seers of forty seers to the maund. Formerly no revenue was levied upon the marble, but about fifty years ago the Rajpoot ruler of the territory imposed a máhsool or tax of eight annas (one shilling,) upon every maund weight of marble exported from Makránah, whether in block, slab, or fashioned articles, superficial measurement. In this manner, weight lost to the revenue by chippings from the marble, after ex-

Marble
Standard
Measure.

traction from the quarry, are recouped, all hollows and scooped out parts, or other inequalities of the fashioned thing, so frequent in marble constructions and model architecture, being calculated for by straight measurement. The chippings are, however, utilized by the quarriers, by burning in kilns, and the powder thus obtained therefrom, is exported for plastering and polishing purposes. It produces a very high polish. The powder moistened with water, is also used as a pungent with which to chew tobacco or pán leaves, so much esteemed by the people of the country. No additional revenue is charged on this much appreciated paste or powder.

Invited to
Koochá-
wun.

On my return to camp a civil message awaited me, with a present of a wild boar just slain, from the Thakoor of the neighbouring Fort of Koocháwun, who, and the Thakoor of Pôhkurn, are the two principal barons of the State. He expressed regret that I should not have taken Koocháwun in my route. It is eight miles from here. My information, I am sorry to think, somewhat implicates his favourite agent or factotum, one Mehrábkhán Kaim-Khánee, as a colleague of dacoits, and notably the Thakoor of Pôhkurn also; but I have still to mature it. Certain it is that Hurree Sing of Towsoena, another place in this neighbourhood, whose boldly managed rescue, and of three other convicted dacoits, from the custody of Captain Ward, my assistant at Jalnah, down Berar, was forcibly effected a little while ago, (v. p. 29, Preamble,) and whose recapture I have in vain

endeavoured to compass, is Mehrabkhan's friend and confidant, and is sheltered by him.

It was whispered here that the Maharajah Holkur of Indore, on exploring intent, as said to be his secret wont, visited Mukranah and other equally distant parts, a few years ago in disguise, attended by seven followers mounted on fleet camels. He went, it was said, to within 60 miles of Lahore, and to Delhi and other cities. No political or other officer had visited these quarries, it was stated, for several years; but some railway surveyors were said to have been in the neighbourhood a few years ago.

10th January, Munnána, 16 miles.—Left Mukránah after dinner yesterday, and travelled throughout the night, close behind our baggage camel train. My bullock cart resembles a compact little tent upon wheels, and being thoroughly a shelter, I can sleep in it and get on very comfortably. At Borá-wur, a large place, to judge from an extensive whitewashed palace or other building exposed to view by our lighted flambeaux, we were delayed for fresh guides and more oil for the torch-bearers. These useful individuals, called Náo and Náwee, who are also the village barbers, are on the establishment of every village in Rajasthan, and are supplied to travellers free of any stated charge, it being the local ruler's privilege and custom to supply even the oil without charge. We reached the present place at dawn, whereupon I sallied out with my gun while my tents should be pitched. Presently I found myself shouted to and abused

Holkur's
alleged
Secret
Tour

Travel-
ling Cart.

Deer pro-
serves.

by some people armed with wooden pitchforks, in a wild jungle track, for firing at a deer. For this and some neighbouring villages were inhabited by Vishnooweas, or worshippers of Vishnoo, who consider it sacrilege to kill or injure antelope, and I at once desisted. The jungle was covered with khejra, a low prickly tree of the wildest aspect abounding in these regions, but here denuded of leaves for the sake of the forage. The inhabitants are a wild lot. A deputation of them waited on me, headed by their chief man, who offered me the usual nuzzur, folded in a cloth. These presentations I only touch in token of recognition, but do not take. On the present occasion it consisted of a single Koocháwun rupee. This and the neighbouring village of Bhôrso form by repute the retreats of a lot of Jat highway robbers. The country is as lawless as it is wild, and I am stared at with marked confusion, approvers of sorts being in my train; but my present object is only to explore and to acquire information.

Quarries
at Kátôh

11th January, *Chôta Kátôh*, 13 miles.—Through Indikôh. The road was heavy and obstructed by low jungle, and the local guides or Agoowahs, were, besides, disinclined to turn out so late at night at the villages on our way. At Indikôh they remonstrated vociferously against the requisition; but as I was attended by Hurkárahs or couriers supplied by the local ruler, bearing the usual painted rods or staves denoting authority, the poor disturbed fellows could not escape the call. We were detained in this manner at each

intervening village. The night was black, cloudy and hot. We reached this halting place at dawn. The country is now more open and with less of sand. Small rocky conical hills are dispersed about the undulating plain, and a curious one with a flat top marks this stage. A Bowrea, a well-known class of low thieves, was my guide this morning in my search for game. He made no secret of his being a robber, and he earned his sixpence. Three ancient local Thakoors, as they styled themselves, old and bowed down, hobbled into my tent with their offering of one rupee each, and some sweetmeats. The latter I passed over to my attendants. To the left of Chôta-Kâtôh was a cluster of low sandstone hills, one being the conical one with a level top. They mark the site of Burrah or the Greater Katôh, and of the principal quarry from which are obtained the flat yellow sandstone slabs, so generally in use here and other adjacent places for roofing and for coping purposes. I visited the spot at evening, the distance being about a couple of miles only. I was surprised to find the quarry not in the hill side, but in the low ground between two hills. Several Mahomedan sungturrâshees were at work in it, who, on my horse neighing as I suddenly rode up to the mouth of the pit, took to flight up the hill side, believing dacoits had come to rob them, the evening hour being the usual time for their appearance. One poor fellow showed me sundry sword cuts on a shoulder and wrist, which he had received in one such attack. The stone

Local
Quarriers.

vein or stratum here lies very little below the surface of the earth, and it consists of masses of sandstone of a whitish hue. The required slabs are obtained from these blocks or boulders by sawing. Two slabs of about 10 to 12 feet long, by about 2 feet broad, are sold for one rupee only at the quarry. They are conveyed away upon small springless carts drawn by bullocks, two slabs only being the load. The vein runs tortuously. There are one or two other similar quarries about a mile distant from the chief one, situated along the table ground peculiarly formed by these low hills. They yield a yellow stone much used for gateways of temples and houses of a better sort. The sungturráshees then conducted me to the Tukhya or tomb of their peer "*Khákee Sahib*," situated near the summit of one of the hillocks. A portion of this shrine is excavated out of the rock of the hill side, the rest being built up of red sandstone in shape of a small fort. A single flat-roofed building, supported by pillars rudely constructed and comprising two or three irregular rooms and passages, forms what is called the "*Tukhya*," the *pillow* or resting-place of the departed holy man ; but his grave, which is not marked by any observable structure, is on the top of the conical hill. The Sungturráshees or Silláwuts here settled, are a simple and timid lot of people. They said they had been located at Burrah-Kátôh since the time of the Emperor Akhbar, and are connected with the marble cutters of Mukránah, where some of them are in the habit of also occa-

sionally working, their common origin being the colony of stone-masons translated from Agra by Akhbar to work the marble mines. The country about these two Kátóhs is not uninteresting.

12th January, *Furróde*, 12 miles.—A large village reached at dawn. The fields, or what were fields, the harvest being gathered, are jealously guarded by tall dry bush fences packed together, after the manner of our own far extending lofty frontier Salt Tax Hedge, entrance into which can only be effected by means of long, very hard wooden pitchforks, such as the offended Vishnoowees had lately brandished at me.² One such enclosure of considerable dimensions belonged to some confederated farmers. There were several threshing-floors Thresh-
ing-floors upon it, where men, women, and children, were merrily occupied, some in winnowing the collected grain in the usual Eastern fashion of letting it fall through the open air from sieves held in uplifted arms; others in beating out grain from the husk by means of short sticks; others in heaping the grain preparatory to winnowing, or in stacking the stubble. One large heap was pointed to as reserved for disposal or payment as revenue. The base of it was studded with the local sirkar's mark or Government stamp, imprinted upon small patches of wood ashes set round its edges. The produce consisted of bájra, jowar, muth a kind of vetch, and of the til seed, from which the oil commonly

² These tridents are made from a very hard species of wood, probably the *Baubool*, the angulations of which peculiarly favour their construction.

in use is expressed. The kurbee, or stalks of the jowar and the bájra, are stacked for forage, but the leaves of the vetch or muth are carried away in square baskets made of reeds and stored as fodder for cattle or camels. This village seems to be a kind of central harvest depôt, being in charge of a Government official called the Commêtee or Commissary.

After breakfast the camp was moved to Rôad, seven miles, the day being pleasant. My followers prefer day marching, but it throws office work into arrears. While the baggage camels wound slowly along some intricate ground, I got off my horse and sat for awhile in the shade of a clump of Baubool trees, and listened to a tale of the former greatness of the ancestors of my wild-looking Jemadar. He was in the service of the Joudhpore Ruler, and had been attached to me for the journey by the local Durbar. He said his people originally came from Arabia and settled in this country, taking service with the local Rajahs. At this point he was joked at by Mehráb Khan, who had now joined my rétinue from Koocháwun, the same man supposed to be in league with dacoits, as to the *reasons* for the migration. The other stood this rally very good-naturedly. The object for this confidence on his part, was, to obtain a certificate from me of his usefulness in my convoy, by which to get his pay increased. These Arab emigrants, from long residence in the country, resemble, although Mahomedans, the Rajpoots themselves. The present individual attends me

with a quota of nine horsemen from the frontier post of Purbetsir. Mehrab Khan has on the other hand, been sent to accompany me along with another set of wild fellows on horseback, by, he says, his master the Lord of Koocháwun. He is a tall fellow of good mien, and intelligent. He is a Kaim-Khanee, a tribe of half Mahomedans, converts from Hindooism. There are other half converted races in Rajpootanah, who still similarly retain many of the rites of their former religion. A third lot of horsemen joined me at evening across country from Deedwánah.

The fine tank at Rôad had long been the undisturbed asylum of wild duck and snipe, notwithstanding its open situation and its being resorted to by the villagers to bathe in and for water; but my clerk, Mr. Clements, who had preceded me, had bagged several, a large grey duck in the number, and had frightened away all the birds. This piece of water was flanked by a group of small temples of a rude sort, built with yellow stone brought from Kátôh. As I rode up, women from the town, Jutnees, Rajpootnees, and the wives and daughters of the several Mahájuns and Bunyas of the place, were occupied, singly or in groups, in filling water at the tank. This went on till dusk, all curiously peering at the strangers suddenly come there, my tent being pitched near the margin.

13th January, Sunday, Rôad.—My usual tents have not been pitched here, a small sleeping Pál being sufficient for the halt. So many natives of Márwár visit Bombay and other places in India

occupied by Europeans that the progress of *Sahib-Logue* in their country, soon becomes known among the settled inhabitants even of these distant and seldom visited regions. My dogs ran down a mon-goose this evening. Am joined by a fresh lot of Rajpoot horsemen from Nágore, with a note from Blair who had written for them.

Nagore. 14th January, Nágore, or the *Serpent City*, 16 miles.—Rode the distance accompanied by “all the king’s horsemen and all the king’s men.” My dogs had become so wild, that they flew at a bullock on the way, and one fastened upon its nose, refusing to be shaken off. My following good-naturedly praised the dog’s pluck—but I was sorry for the occasion. Fortunately the animal was not much hurt. Had it been a cow, or a Nundee the scape-bull set at large as a peace offering to the Deity, the result might have been unpleasant. The road lay over an open, gravelly plain. The city of Nágore with its white walls appeared to sight from a long distance. My camp is pitched within the body of the place. This is not my usual habit, for it is always preferable to be out in the open. Nágore is a “fenced city,” being surrounded with high walls, bastions, and a dry ditch. It is very extensive, but the numerous habitations, all built of stone, are mostly tenantless, the inhabitants of the once populous place having greatly diminished, being, indeed, so few, that it seemed to me, from the prevailing silence and solitude, like a totally deserted city. I visited the fort or stronghold, and the fine old palace and disused pleasure grounds

within it. The beautifully polished walls of the palace apartments were covered with paintings of dancing women and grand processions, the several figures being packed or huddled together in them, without regard to perspective. Received a number of ceremonial visits from the city worthies bringing the usual offerings. Wrote to Major Impey, the Resident at Jodhpore, proposing to ride across to that capital to-morrow.

13th January, Nágore, Halt.—At morning I walked about the numerous streets and lanes of the place, little heeded by a few people who occupy them. The fort, which is covered by the city walls, consists of four irregular faces composed of tall round towers connected by long crenelated curtains, the contour whereof is followed by a covert way similarly composed, but at a lower height, a broad dry ditch encircling the entire body of the place. The single gateway leading into it is surmounted with the open elongated cupola, shaped like a dragon's back, so usual in Rajpoot edifices. Passing through an inner gateway intricately situated within the outer one, the palace precincts are entered, composed of the usual different buildings, all artistically planned and arranged, and crossed and re-crossed by aqueducts, reservoirs, and garden squares with pretty cupolas among them, and other sheltered retreats or alcoves supported by pillars. Marble would not seem to have been much used in these structures, the walls thereof being mostly covered with the highly polished surfaces produced from marble powder before described.

Gôman
Garrison.

Origin
of the
Serpent
City.

One fine building, however, covering one of the faces of square garden compartments into which the grounds are subdivided, and leading into the Râwula or Zenâna precincts, was very gracefully constructed of sandstone of a red-grey colour brought from the Kâtôh quarries. Faced with this stone, and its underlying hall supported with pillars polished with the same white stone, the structure acquires a very finished and graceful appearance. The Rajah of Jodhpore seldom occupies this palace or visits Nágore. He had not done so, I was informed, for eleven years. An old Rajpoot Killadur has charge of, and is the seneschal of the fort and palace. I was conducted by him over the whole place. The garrison, as well of the fort as of the city, is composed of a number of Bhártee Gôsaens, sub-named Mâhápoorush, men of reputed sanctity and bravery and a good deal employed by the Rulers of Jodhpore as reliable custodians. About six hundred of these independent but demure-looking persons, form the Nágore charge. They are commanded by a Jemadar of their own people, who is also their Môhünt or Abbot, and he is consequently held in reverence by them. There are four such Headmen told off for any emergency, at Nágore, of whom one is now on duty with the Rajah at Jodhpore. The story of the place is this. The space now covered by the fort and city is traditioned to have, at a very remote period, consisted of a lake called Bâlsümmünd, where the Rulers of Márwâr were wont to resort for sport, the entire neighbourhood being then covered with jun-

gle, much infested by wild beasts. On one such occasion the Rajah beheld a Békree or wild sheep, ^{Legend of Nagore.} defending its young one against a lion, and he augured from it that a fort built there would be impregnable. A Pundit in attendance was consulted, who, on affecting to refer to his sacred book, or Pôti, pointed to a spot on the margin of the lake, and requested the Rajah to strike a tent peg into it, on his withdrawing which its point was observed "to be covered with blood." It was declared "to have pierced *the head of a Náy, or Cobra.*" The king was advised to strike the peg again into the same spot, when on its being again drawn out, "it was found to have struck through the *serpent's tail.*" This was declared by the augur to be most propitious: "Let that spot be the centre of a new city and a fort." The present city was thereupon built upon that site, and hence its name of Nágore. It became the Royal residence, the Court removing to it from Koomnuggur, the ancient capital of the principality, a large deserted place about ten miles distant, where now a village only exists, but which is said to be a flourishing one. But Nágore was not so impregnable. Certainly during the present century, Appah Sahib, the Mahratta, besieged it for several months and failed to reduce it. He was assassinated while bathing at a place within his entrenchments two or three miles from Nágore. But the place was nevertheless taken at a subsequent period by another Mahratta adventurer, only, however, by a diabolical stratagem, such as the ^{Revolt of the Ráhtores.} arch perpetrator had for long been an adept in,

of whom Bishop Heber correctly wrote that he was "one of the most notorious villains India ever produced."

In a contest for superiority between the Rajahs of Jodhpore and Jeypore, the former was worsted in a pitched battle at Purbetsir, situate as before observed on the frontiers of their respective domains. Upon this all the Ráhtore subjects of Jodhpore, Ráhtores being still the principal inhabitants of Márwár, revolted from their allegiance to the discomfited Rajah. The rebel party was headed by Sewáee Sing, the powerful Ráhtore Thakoor or Lord of Pohkurn, and chief of the clan of Koompawuts. He took possession of Nágore, then as now under the rule of a Hákim, or Governor, and he thereupon summoned to his aid the celebrated Pindaree leader, Ameer Khan Nawab, famous for his devastating raids in Rajpootanah, and subsequently the questionably recognized Ruler of Touk, a principality carved out for himself by rapine and bloodshed. Sewáee Sing swore to recognize and obey him as the monarch of all Márwár, if he would assist him in dispossessing the legitimate ruler, Rajah Manu Sing of Jodhpore. But on the way Ameer Khan was won over by Maun Sing: "Only slay me my foe Sewáee Sing, and I will consent to become a Mahomedan, to pay you a sum of fifty lakhs of rupees, and to grant you a strip of territory." The Pindáree halted his forces at Moondwa a town eight miles distant from Nágore, and then by protestations and cajolery, inveigled the rebel Thakoor of Pohkurn, into a belief that he was his very sincere ally: "Swear to me that you will

The Murder of the Lord of Pohkurn and Master of his Ráhtores.

stand by me always, and I will make you the Ruler of all Márwár." "Swear on your part that you will not play me false." Thus they mutually asseverated and assured each other, and together repaired to the shrine and tomb of Tárgum Sahib, the local Saint, situated a short distance without the city defences, where, placing a Kôrán between them, they reciprocally vowed to each other accordingly. The compact thus solemnized, and the Pindáree chieftain feasted, the latter went back to his camp at Moondwah, "to conquer Márwár for you." Two or three days subsequently, Sewáee Sing himself moved out from Nágore. Encamping his Ráhtores in the open plain hard by, he went, attended by a few retainers only, to Ameer Khan's camp as his invited guest. All were received in tents prepared for the occasion, *but the ground of which had been mined*. Presently the tents were cut down upon the assembled guests, and the mine sprung, destroying them all. The Pindáree force then fell upon and slaughtered the Koompawut Ráhtores encamped on the plain, and pushed into and took possession of Nágore. They remained in possession of it for two years, and only left it on payment to them of the stipulated money and assignment of the promised territory. They carried away with them too, all the cannon of the place, only a few pieces now remaining on the walls.

I visited Tárgum Sahib's tomb. The gate-
way of it is said to exactly resemble that of the
Mosque at Mecca. It is built, however, of yellow
sandstone, quarried at Kátôh, and it was stated
that the Saint before his death had sent the

The Tomb
of the
local
Saint

Silláwut architect of it, seven times to perform Háj, or pilgrimage at Mecca, before he felt assured that a correct copy of the outer gateway of it had been obtained. His memory is held in great reverence, and his shrine is one of the principal "Súrrún's" or sanctuaries of Márwár, where criminals may safely seek shelter. There are also two or three ancient mosques at Nágore, and Eedgahs, with minarets at either end, raised "in the time of the Padshahs." I ascended one of these minarets, although declared to be haunted and a rash act to go up it. A fine view of the surrounding country was obtained from its summit, and of the terraces of the deserted palace inside of the fort. The story went, that when the place was occupied, a youth was one day observed from the palace by the Rajah, to be heedlessly looking down from the same minaret, at a time the Ráni was walking on the flat roof of her chamber; a bullet from the Rajah's gun warned him off. The Musjid at the foot of this particular minaret, bore an inscription on a slab fixed at the back of the mūmbir or pulpit, that the edifice was erected in the reign of Akhbar, by his minister, Houssein Cooly, in the year 984 of the Hegira (A.D. 1587.) It is out of repair, and deserted as a place of worship.

Peeping
Tom.

The gateway leading into the walled and turreted enclosure, in which the Saint Tárgum is entombed, is a beautiful structure. The arched and elaborately carved entrance, is supported on either side, by three tiers of pulpits, if they may be

so termed, or open recesses, each series surmounted by a cupola. A narrow staircase, unprotected by any balustrade, leads up on either side to a spacious terrace over the gateway. I visited the spot at a late hour when riding round the city walls. A hoarse old Fucqueer cried out to me and my Rajpoot Sowár "to take our horses off the pavement." We complied, and I drew near to him. He gave me a long account of the reputed virtues of the deceased Pir, and the history of the tomb. An oil lamp dimly glimmered in a much blackened niche on a side of the doorway, the light of which the old man declared reached and was reflected from the parent shrine at Mecca! Tárghum Sahib, he said, died 250 years ago, and oil had been supplied ever since for this light, burnt every nightfall for a couple of hours. A Sepoy of the place accompanied us from the spot. He had been repeating his prayers there. He regularly did so at that late hour, he said, "because from the sanctity of him who lay buried there, and his many good deeds in his life-time, they were always attended with a blessing."

The old
Custodian
of the
Tomb of
the Local
Saint.

As to the Sùrrûn afforded by this shrine, there are, I was informed, five such places of refuge in Márwár, all presided over or ruled by one and the same Náth or lord. This individual is the "spiritual guide," or Gooroo of Hindu ascetics of the Kánfurra sect before mentioned, in honour of whom they were established, where criminals and murderers might safely seek protection and be sheltered from pursuers. These asylums may

Sùrrûn
or Sanctuaries.

not be invaded—not even by the Rajah himself. One, at a place called Burlee, a few miles from Nágore, was so strictly regarded that one of its special privileges was to spot the forehead of the refugee with its own particular Teeka or sovereign mark, and he was then enabled to go about openly in the city without molestation. Sürüns were not, however, originally intended to shelter the professional bandit or assassin, and such offenders may not rely on being protected in them from arrest. The other three chief places of refuge, are, Chowpásnee, Oodeymundur, and Máhmündür close outside of the walls of Jodhpore.

The suburbs of Nágore are vast, and stretch some way from the city, but being scattered, are deserted at night except by very poor people, for there is a great fear here of robbers. These suburban hamlets, or groups of dwellings, are called Bánse. There are several small sheets of water outside of the city, and too much neglected tanks within it, upon which several very fine grey duck disported, free from molestation.

The
Gosaens.

The Gosaens referred to form a kind of imperial guard.³ The Maharajah has about 5000 of these

³ P S.—These ascetics are said to exercise great control over their senses, whence the derivation, I believe, of their name. The sect is not restricted to any single class, for Brahmins, Rajpoots, and other Hindu tribes are of their number. They forswear marriage, live in monasteries, or roam about the country as religious mendicants, their nearly nude bodies covered with ashes, foreheads marked as the followers of Siva, and hair braided and twisted round and round high above the tops of their heads—or dressed in clothes dyed with red turmeric. Many follow trade and become very wealthy men, but a large portion take to arms

devout mercenaries in his service, distributed at Nágore, Jodhpoor, and other principal forts in Márwár. All are governed by Mohúnts, and the Sayer (Sa'ir) revenue of the cities or forts (a tax upon personal property,) and of the villages included in their charge, or which they guard, have been assigned to them in lieu of pay. This revenue is farmed out to Mohájuns by a Punch or Committee of the Mohúnts. Formerly they used to derive a considerable sum from this assignment; but latterly, from so many of the villages being marked off as Zenána holdings for the maintenance of the queens and princesses, and from so many being also declared to be Khálsa, or peculiarly the Rajah's own crown property, the allotment is not, now-a-day, nearly so valuable. The Gosaens seem, however, to be a contented lot. They may be seen in armed groups at each of the six gateways of the city, and at the entrance into the citadel. In Jeypore territory the same sort of people are similarly employed as Swiss Guards, but are there perhaps more properly called Nágas, from their reverencing the Nág—a large body of whom garrison the celebrated fortress of Runtūmbore in that state. A great many artificers in brass and iron, inhabit Nágore, a busy people,

and make very brave and reliable mercenaries. We have many Gosaens in our Sepoy ranks—tall, athletic fellows, and good soldiers. In the latter capacity they partake, Tod said, of the character of the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem. The “split-eared” Jogeas, called Kán-phut or Kánfurra, before mentioned, form a branch of their order.

whose hammerings resound throughout the day, and nearly all the night.

A Question of Khôj or Track-pursuit.

A troublesome question having arisen on the subject of Khôj, or pursuit of robbers by trail, on a complaint from the Rhotuck police, that they had been thwarted by the native officials of Bôhâna in Khêtree territory, in their pursuit of some dacoits in a recent case of robbery near Rhotuck, in Punjab jurisdiction, I wrote to-day to the Inspector-General of the Punjab police on the subject of the present rules of pursuit. They seem to me to be a little lop-sided, favouring British police action in such cases, and scarcely even-handed the other way:—"I am engaged in arranging for fuller play being given to these rules, being quite sure that inasmuch as the Native Rulers themselves are concerned, there is no desire to check or baffle pursuit into their territories on the part of the British police. The obstructions which are met with, are rather the work of their subordinate officers; but I greatly hope that for the future, there will be less cause for complaint, or for recriminations, such as have been referred to in this correspondence. The Khêtree officials have denied the accusation, and have charged the Rhotuck police with violence."

A Wukeel, deputed by the Rajah of Bikaner to accompany me to that capital, waited upon me with the information that he had brought "elephants and horsemen, and everything" for my journey there; but I have resolved on a camel ride across country to Jodhpore, sixty miles distant, and from there to over-

take my camp about the time it reaches Bikaner. There is a post-office at Nágore, one in the circle established by the Postmaster-General in Rajpootanah; but although I received my post through it to-day, it is far from a safe means of conveyance, the Dák having been plundered so lately as only three days ago—a frequent occurrence in these wild tracts. The Kárindah or Agent of the absent Hákim of the district, just arrived, also visited me, bringing more abundant offerings in the item of sweetmeats. He has engaged to provide a couple of “good-riding camels” for myself and a Nujjeb, for my contemplated journey to-night.

Night.—After getting ready for the projected ride, booted and spurred, suitable camels were not to be had! A sorry lot was brought late at evening “to choose from,” all freshly-caught animals improvised for the occasion, and unprovided, too, with any riding appurtenances. Not being disposed to try the long ride so unsatisfactorily mounted, I have written to Impey accordingly; for from former experiences I could hardly expect, so ill-provided, to accomplish the distance by to-morrow night as I wished to do, and I am glad to have escaped, by the failure, the jolting, and soreness of limbs I was safe to endure. The object for the trip was not only to see the fine City of Jodhpoor, and to be introduced to the Maharajah, but also to make myself better acquainted, by the personal intercourse, with his Highness’s arrangements for our girráec or suppression purposes, and

to gain from the British Resident a continuance of his own valuable co-operation.

Later :—The plundered mail-bag has been recovered. It had been thrown away by the robbers, with the abstraction, however (which is noticeable,) of the *only* valuable parcel it had contained—some gold and silver lace! The robbery took place near a village short of Mairta, where there is a branch post leading off to Jodhpore, sixty-seven miles distant from it on the one hand, and to Nágore, forty-two miles distant on the other; and, what is fortunate, my own letters were in the recovered bags! Some of them are important.

16th January, Ulláee, 14 miles.—I left Nágore at sunrise by the Bikaneer gate, passing through what seemed a more inhabited quarter of the city. The road was in some parts heavy; country quite open and of desolate aspect, diversified only with ranges of low sandhills and stunted khêjra. Field rats abounded, whose holes or warrens undermined everywhere the surface of the ground, but which our horses did not seem to distrust at all. Two villages only lay on our way; they were fenced round with packed bushes of thorn, the dwellings being mostly circular and thatched. The day has been cloudy. Among my letters is one from Blair, who writes that as Eden's camp was in that direction he had taken the opportunity to send a Mêgphunnah Thug approver and his wife to Bugroo, eighteen miles distant, "to see whether they can exhume the corpse of the 'Gosaen' they

had confessed to have murdered and buried in a nullah there." *Later* :—The murder was satisfactorily established by this inquiry, the villagers of the locality certifying that the body of the murdered mendicant had been dragged out by jackals and was found partly devoured. The present was a case of simple Thuggee by strangulation, but was one of a series of murders by what is termed "Mêg-phunnah," or Thuggee in which parents are deprived of life by means of poison or by being strangled, for the sake of the possession of the children travelling with them. This was locally thought to be a new species of crime prevalent in some parts of Rajpootanah ; but the locality or venue was only accidental, the crime not being confined to any particular district, and being, according to our records, as old almost as *Thuggee proper*, although not so early known to us as the latter. The kidnapped children are sold at distant places or to persons of the wandering classes, such as are likely to convey them to far-off countries. Brinjâras (grain carriers,) are generally the purchasers of the male children, on payment of comparatively trifling sums ; but *girls* are more profitably disposed of, and are usually bought by Nuths, a class of gipsy showpeople, to be reared to the trade followed by their women. I once reported that as many as 2000 girls had then recently been thus disposed of at Gwalior alone ; not that they were all similarly obtained by "Mêgphunnah," for the kidnapping of children is a common practice. In the present matter, some Mêgphunnah Thugs of the

Mêg-
phunnah
Thugs.

The Sale
of Girls.

Instances
of
Mog-
phannah
Thuggee.

Byrájee or mendicant class, the persons more generally addicted to the crime, had lately been arrested by us in Rajpootanah and sentenced to transportation for life, one of whom, accused of being a Thug, was a man who had escaped from the custody of our department twenty years previously. The cases of Thuggee on record against the prisoners, were of an old date, but two became divulged of recent occurrence. Three of the arrested persons confessed, of whom two were a man and his wife; the third person not only recorded the murder of the above Gosaen (which the man and his wife also thereupon did,) but narrated some previous cases. Here is one of them: The gang consisted of eight persons, including a woman. They had been staying some time in páls or booths, near the threshing-floors of a village by Hindown in Jeypore territory, subsisting by begging grain, &c., under the guise of professional mendicants. They moved towards Ulwur, and from there went on, begging alms, till they reached Rewáree in British territory. They were taking food by a tank there, when a Mahomedan woman passed by, who, being accosted by the female of their party, was eventually persuaded to travel in their company. At evening they all halted at a place in Ulwur territory: "At seven o'clock that night we tried to strangle her with the roomál, or waistcloth, but failing, I cut her throat (he at first said the woman did so,) and we then threw her body into a well on the roadside, about half a koss on the Delhi side of Renágur; the

well was a kutchra one, that is, set round only with loose stones ; there was very little water in it, and a doodee tree grew out of it of the sort called k  mree in Rajpootanah. She was pregnant and about thirty years old. We found she had on her person a small box containing some gold and silver trinkets, some ashrupees (gold mohurs,) and other cash, in all to the value of 400 rupees. We pushed on to Ulwur, and there divided this booty. Jairam-dass was the strangler. Her hands and feet were held, and I cut her throat."—Here is another of the divulged cases : the gang was a much larger one, occasioned by several of the same tribe congregating for a bhund  ra or feast, held near a *chetrie* in a garden at Gon  ta in Kotah territory. "After the bhund  ra we moved to N  tha, a hillock on the river bank, and stayed there that night near a neem tree. A man of the Jat caste, his wife and their two girls and a boy, also alighted there. At midnight we strangled both the man and the woman with the *roomal*, and threw away their bodies into the Chumbul River. We let Chuttur-d  ss, one of our number, have one of the girls for a sum of 112 rupees. Her name was Ch  tee, and she was about three years old ; and Gopald  ss took the other girl, named Gobindee, five years old, for a like sum. The boy was only about eighteen months old, named Hun  ta, and he was made over to Heerad  ss for a payment of five rupees only. We divided these sums between us at K  tah. The man and the woman had come there from Bhurtpore, and, being beggars, had come to

the bhundára to beg food.”—I transcribe shortly yet another case described by the same man : “ One Lálya, a buláhee (or village guide,) was serving at Kunkrôha in Kôtah. We went there, and, persuading him to accompany us, we went begging to Ruttungurh in the same territory. We strangled him there one midnight with the roomal, and cast away his body into a river among the hills. This was in the month of Kooar (September—October). Chôkadáss was the strangler. We also murdered the woman by whom Lálya was accompanied, whose corpse we also threw into the river. They had four children with them, a boy and three girls, whom we took away with us. The eldest girl was about seven years old, named Jumna ; the second was five ; and the third a child about a year old.” Seeta, a man of their own tribe, from whose service the murdered man had been enticed away, “ followed us to Seepree in Gwalior, and claimed possession of the children, as Lálya had been, he declared, his chêla or disciple. This dispute among ourselves lasted for months, and at length it reached the cutcherry or office of the ‘ Sooba Sahib,’ or deputy of Seepree. But Seeta only complained that the children’s parents had died, not that they had been killed ; so we were content to hand them over to him, and thus were unable to sell them ourselves. I don’t know what became of them.” These and another are authenticated cases. In one, our record of such cases, shows that a man and his wife were strangled and a boy and a girl kidnapped ; in another a man and wife strangled and

their three girls and a boy kidnapped; in a third three men and their three wives, all travelling together, were strangled, and two boys and two girls kidnapped; and in a fourth a man and wife were strangled and a boy and a girl kidnapped. The perpetrators of these acts were Sir-Bhungees, a low tribe of professional mendicants. I note that in the case of the murder at Bugroo of the Gosuen, the idea of a *murder* having been committed, only presented itself to the local authorities on our detectives going to the spot to make inquiries, although the corpse had lain on the roadside exposed to the gaze of every passer by!

17th January, Bhuggoo, seven miles.—On the Bikaner frontier: a short but heavy march through deep sand. A slight sprinkling of rain before dawn. Passed through an extensive tract of ploughed ground waiting for rain. There was a succession of these enclosures, all very large in size and surrounded with thorn. They were within the limits of a Vishnoowee village. Antelope abounded, easy to be approached, but may not be molested, as before instanced. We are plagued with “bhurrôtes,” small intensely prickly grass globules. The country seems to be divided among *Field Rats*, *Bhurrôtes*, *Rat-holes*, and *Râhtores*! But the “bhurrôtes” (*brutes*,) cling to and get into everything, and set us wild with scratching! And yet they have a use, for however insignificant and a nuisance in themselves, each thing envelops a seed, and this seed forms the food of the people of the desert country in the

Cháruna.

time of dearth. The rats moreover feed upon them. Bhuggoo is a Chárun village. A troublesome race whom nobody may annoy. They are the Bháts or bards and heralds of the country, and every Rajah has one or more of them in his court to proclaim his titles and recite his genealogy. They have certain privileges, infringement of any of which will cause them to gash and maim themselves till yielded to. Even the Rajahs themselves dare not molest them. But I have not yet met any who bear scars of such self-inflicted wounds! I note that they are held in great sanctity in Rajpootanah, and are greatly feared from their reputed habit of maiming and even immolating themselves when their privileges are questioned. In this Bikaner territory, as well as in other remote parts of Rajpootana, no fugitive criminal may be recovered or his custody claimed, after he has once sought surrun or sanctuary in a Chárun village. "Their personal security is considered sufficient," says Professor Wilson, "for engagements of the most important description, any breach of which involves the death of the surety, or of some member of his family. They also exist by carrying grain, salt, groceries, and the like." To this I add that they are also addicted to *lifting cattle* in their progress through the country as traders. I once purchased a very fine pair of draught bullocks from a tánda of their tribe, so low down as in the southern Mahratta country, which were not bullocks of their own country. They are a sect of Hindoos (*vide, ante*, footnote, page 19).

Chárun
San-
ctuary.

18th January, Rôra, ten miles.—Crossed into

Bikaneer territory to-day at three miles from last ground. The boundary line is not correctly shown in the map, being there drawn at seven miles further on. The villages, too, are similarly misplaced. Sand hills are now more pronounced—great, bulky, and forbidding—and yet not without their purposes, for they shelter the little valleys in which the hamlets are located, and stay the progress of the rolling sand. The slopes facing the north-east, the direction of the prevailing winds, are the sandy sides of these hummocks. The opposite sides are more abrupt, and it is there the habitations are placed. At this stage I found great preparations for me—an elephant, a camel phaeton, a detachment of red-coated horsemen, and of Telinga infantry (as troops composed of men from Hindostan are called,) armed with musket and bayonet, all accompanied by a Commissary, who, and an Agent on the part of the Maharajah, waited on me with a dálee of several trays of almonds, raisins, sweetmeats of sorts, sugared pistachios, grapes from Affghanistan, packed in cotton, and ranged inside of little drums, oranges and siccated pomegranates, also a couple of “coozas” or round earthen vessels, containing the white sugar candy for which Bikaneer is celebrated—all provided and sent out by the Rajah. Two large melons, grown at the village, were also among the offerings.—One of my clerks has caught the mumps, and my medicines are not of a sort to effect a cure, being for fevers and dysentery only, and for cholera.

The frequency of mail robberies, while in transit

Mail
Rob-
beries.

through native territories, being an evil not a little talked of, and the complaint general on the part of native Rulers, that "compensation" for those robberies should be exacted from them, seeing that the incitement to commit them was in a manner afforded by ourselves, I have, with the recent examples before me of the plunder of the mail cart running between Agra and Bhurtpore (*vide, ante, pages 22, 34, 37,*) and of the recent robbery, in this direction, of the Dak conveying my own post, thought the opportunity favourable for bringing the matter prominently to notice. It is supposed that it cannot be possibly known to outsiders that valuable articles are dispatched by any particular post, but to the senders only, and occasionally perhaps at the chullán, or despatching Office; but the present was an instance among many others to the contrary, the valuable parcels only having been abstracted and all *letters* thrown away! The robbery has in more frequent cases, too, only occurred when the mail bags contained *some valuable consignment*. I have supposed that in regions where almost every village has its two or three robbers, the knowledge that the post *usually* conveyed something valuable, was a sore temptation to rob it, if only on a *chance* of acquiring a booty, even should information of the contents of the mail *not* be previously obtained, and that some system might be devised limiting such despatches by the public Post. The measure might be inconvenient to the limited European community, who

like to have their occasional small wants conveyed by the post, but it would restrict native Máhájuns, for whose benefit more particularly the cross country posts in these wild regions have been established, from despatching by post, as at present is their wont, closely pressed packets of bank notes to a great amount, and even bullion and jewellery. The ability to send such things by the British post, presses with some degree of unfairness moreover on native Rulers. They justly complain that while we create the allurements on the one hand, we hold them responsible on the other, that the temptation is not withstood in tracts so circumstanced as theirs—so infested, so sparsely peopled, and so inappreciably supervised—although, as they aver—and the contention is fair—that *they do their best to prevent the evil*. Owing to the prevalence of the crime, it was ruled by the Government of India, that compensation be required from native chieftains on all occasions of its occurrence within their respective territories. It was considered that by this they would be induced to introduce a better protection of the British Dák when running through their jurisdictions—but by them the imposed fine was regarded to be derogatory. I found it to be so viewed when I travelled last year in the Nizam's territory in the Deccan, and I find it to be so here in Rajpootanah. The rule had been only very recently promulgated when I returned from Hyderabad, the capital of the Nizam, and I mentioned to the Foreign Secretary the ill-feeling it had created. The Bombay Government had

meanwhile remonstrated against the rule, on the ground that not only was it already an interdiction to send valuable articles by the post, but that senders thereof were, by a former rule, also *prohibited from compensation* in the event of the robbery or loss thereof in transit. It was thereupon ordered that the required compensation should be formed into a "reserve fund." This was a distinction without a difference! For the exaction still held, while it was not stated *for whom* it was reserved! And as under such circumstances, a native ruler might hesitate to submit to the levy, on the ground that it was not required to *compensate* anyone with, to "compensate" being the avowed object of the order for it, thus involving probably a correspondence which might with advantage be foregone, I to-day addressed the Private Secretary on the subject. I concluded my letter thus: "I speak only of the question as it affects my own supervision. I find all native rulers most anxious to assist Government in suppressing the predatory system. They are ready to league themselves with Government for such a purpose, but they perceive that one of the reasons for its existence in their territories (which is also one of the reasons for the same thing—the same species of robbery—in our own,) is the pernicious facility with which articles of value are despatched by the British post, and that although this has been prohibited by the Post Office rules, it is in a measure allowed, and that they are in a manner *mulcted* when such things are

robbed in their territories, although, as they are aware, they are also robbed within our own better governed districts, of which the recent Dāk robbery near Agra, a few days after the late Durbar, was an instance."

"I am quite sure" (I said,) "it would add very much to the popularity of his Excellency's Government, taken in connection with the measure by which native Rulers were excused, as recently, from contributing towards the expenses of the British Government in the suppression of Thuggee and Dacoity in native territory, and would facilitate, moreover, the speedier suppression of dacoity, or of that species of dacoity, at any rate, the plunder of Her Majesty's mails, than which none is attended with greater inconvenience to the general community, if it should please the Viceroy to take the subject under his reconsideration, with a view in some measure to check at least, if not altogether to mitigate the evil, whether with reference to what I particularly complain of, namely, the reception for despatch of valuable articles by a post-office, or to any continued necessity for exacting compensation in any form from Native States on the robbery thereof; and I would beg you to submit the matter to his Excellency's favourable notice." I have thus delivered myself of my growl, but I tremble—*Palam mutire plebeio, piaculum est!*

19th January, Bhāmutsir, 11 miles.—No rain last night, although looked for. It falls but seldom in these parts, even in the usual rainy season, and

cultivation is consequently precarious; but a sufficient rainfall is so much hoped for, that on the chance of it, a much larger expanse of ground is ploughed and prepared, than is proportionate with the very limited number of inhabitants. This indicates a deal of industry and energy. So seldom, however, does enough fall, that the people have accustomed their cattle, even water-loving buffaloes, to drink only on every third day, even should they perchance be able to let them do so oftener.

I performed this stage in the comfortable phaeton provided for me. It is drawn by four camels, on each camel a wild long-haired rider. We were followed by a retinue of camel sowars, horsemen, and infantry, the howda'ed elephant being in attendance lest I might like to change to her.

20th January, Sunday, Bhámutsir; halt.—A cloudy day, with gusts of wind. Being pitched in the open, the sand rushed streaming through my tents. My old servant contrived, nevertheless, to lay out milk and make butter from it. Our native servants never despair, and manage to serve up all our requirements whatever the weather. They are ever full of expedients.—A walk at evening in the uninviting waste.

21st January, Ambísir, 14 miles.—Walked the first koss to the village of Purwur, and there I changed to the Rajah's elephant, a female forty years old. At another koss we passed by Ráesesir, which was a group of four detached hamlets or dhánees. These small clusters of habitations characterize all the villages, and are sometimes at

long distances from each other. Sand hills have been left behind, the country now presenting a succession of undulations. At Desnôk, two koss farther on, I dismounted to look at a famed surna or sanctuary, dedicated to a celebrated Chárun woman named Kurnee, in whose honour a mundur or small temple was there erected by the first Rajah of Bikaner, "because she had declared that he would inherit the country." The mundur was a square building entered by a gateway of carved red stone, and enclosed within it was a smaller one, opening into a shrine sacred to the local tutelary deity Káli Bhowanee (the same whom Thugs worship as the Goddess of Destruction.) The place is in charge of several Cháruns, an old female being the present chief priestess. Some Bunyas and other Hindoos had crowded into the inner sanctum, and were praying and bowing down their heads upon the pavement in front of the idol. I was asked to take off my boots if I crossed the threshold ; but I preferred to stand at the doorway opening upon the bedaubed fetish. The steps of the outer gateway were covered with blood-stains of goats daily sacrificed in propitiation of the grim goddess. Other devotees offer milk or grain, and while the officiating Cháruns are content, and gladly, to feed upon the flesh of the victims thus abundantly supplied, rats appropriate the other offerings. Placed in front of the idol was a large tray, spread with wheat, where a numerous colony of sleek and shining common house-rats were feeding in

noisome mass, undeterred by the presence of the worshippers, in and among whom they ran about and squeaked, without a chance of their being ever driven away; for to injure or slay one of these asylumed animals, would be as great an offence as to give up an offender who had sought shelter there from pursuers. But, as the Cháruns themselves told me, a *murderer* would not be allowed protection in it, and that the sanctuary was only intended for state offenders, such as Mootasuddees or accountants, or Commissaries who should cheat the Rúj, or for such other minor criminals. As, however, it was a surna under the Maharajah's special protection, who himself sacrificed at it on the occasion of the great mēla or religious fair annually held at the shrine, I ordered my Duffedar to avoid going through the place with the approvers in his charge. I did this at the suggestion of the Rajah's Agent in attendance on me, lest any of them should, as they passed the spot in the night march, cry out to claim asylum, and the Cháruns turn out to rescue them; not, as he added, that there would be any real harm or obstruction (kubáhut,) in their being taken through the place, but that it was better to avoid any chance of collision with Cháruns. I perceived the sense of this, for I knew that the Meenah approvers with me, for instance, all new men and chafing under the restraint imposed upon them, were rogues enough to raise such an outcry under a chance of their getting away in the hubbub. But truly, these Cháruns override even

their Rulers when their privileges are invaded. Probably it is through fear of them that the influence they exercise is seldom put to the test ; or it may be that their threats of self-laceration are swelling words only ; for certain it is, that not one of the entire community serving at this temple, of whom, too, many were aged men, could show me a single scar anywhere about his person, of wounds such as Cháruns are reputed to inflict upon themselves when offended ! I invited them to show me some such marks upon their bodies, but they only laughed when unable to do so, admitting as the reason, that they were never molested—"never put to it."

Close to a large rock outside the place, where a numerous company of villagers, both of the locality and from the hamlets round about, was drawing water, were several small round mortar cisterns or reservoirs. In these koombhs, or baths, water was more or less stored, collected from drippings passing through gutters from the main supply, for the use of local outcasts, who may not, nor indeed, may anyone not being of the domineering Chárun body, draw water from the great well itself. This well is said to yield a never-failing supply, a blessing declared to be assured through the intercession of the said defunct priestess and saint. It is one of the deepest of the very deep wells of Bikaneer, dropping 309 feet to the surface of the water. The deified priestess is declared to have originally come from Jesulmere, at the farther extremity of Rajpootanah, marching on Scinde.

Many extraordinary stories are related of her : she could restore life to the dead ; flee or flit in an instant of time to the remotest places ; curse or bless with instantaneous effect ; at her command a wicked man would fall dead at her feet ; she could form a kingdom or destroy it—and all devout Rajpoots, Bunyas and Mahájuns, flock to do her worship, from all Márwar, from Meywar, from Jeypore and all Rajasthán. And further, she is so much revered, that every Rajpoot wears suspended from his neck, in gold or silver, a *mooruth* or medallion bearing her effigy. But with all these specialities, this potentiality and holiness, her shrine has a “fu’some atmosphere,” the priests and priestesses, rats, pigeons and devotees, throng so closely into the contracted chamber, that the *odour of sanctity* would of itself forbid any intrusion on my part, even if I should have been allowed it with my shoes on !

Desnôk.

Desnôk may be said to be a town composed of agglomerated patches of dwellings of a better sort, each collection distinguished by tall tapering and impervious hedges of thorn. The inhabitants—the women on the house-tops—turned out to behold my cavalcade pass through their hedge-formed lanes. The position is amid a jungle of low Bhère trees or bushes, here called bôres, yielding a kind of acid cherry of not unpleasant taste ; but all around and beyond the country was perfectly open, with no more upon it than the leaf-stripped Khêjra here and there, and seldom occurring bushes of the akh or maddar, the broad sage-

green leaves of which are used for thatching, and the milky gluten which exudes from the plant, for fomentations of the injured limbs of camel, elephant and cattle, or for internal medicine.

Scarcity, amounting almost to starvation, is so often the lot of the lower classes inhabiting the unsheltered region, that migration in quest of food or of means, is frequent, and the families of the absent ones may be seen at their poor abiding-places, grouped together in soiled and tattered clothing, tending their children as best they can—ill clad, ill fed and unhappy—their bullocks long ago sold—and themselves huddled under inverted carts, carefully preserved in this manner within low mud wall enclosures, to serve not only as dwelling-places, but, hopefully, to be again used, although already shrunk, cracked and falling to pieces. The better classes, however—Rajpoots, Játs, Cháruns, Gosaens, and Traders—do not appear to be in any straits, being fairly dressed; and, although living frugally, they seem to be doing well.

From Deshnok our track turned at a sharp angle across the same open country for yet five miles, and Ambásir, our present halting-place, was not reached till late in the forenoon. The sun shone out for a space from below the thick-set clouds, revealing, as we drew up at my tents, a brief glimpse of the white buildings and temple spires of Bikaner, situated on a long low slope five koss distant, although seeming to be no more than two or three miles off. At dusk a couple of "wolves of the evening," covered by the additional

darkness occasioned by the clouds, stole up to our camp, intent on carrying off a heifer there tethered; but being perceived, were scared away with many bad names from my followers.

ikaneer. 22nd January, *Bikaneer*, ten miles.—Through Odeyrámsir and Beenásir, both good-looking villages with substantial houses, plastered with a red earth plentiful in the neighbourhood. Thorn hedges are still, however, the feature of every village or town, even in the suburbs of the city itself. My elephant was, by direction of the Wakeel with me, acting as the “Master of the Ceremonies,” made to pace very slowly the whole stage. Presently one of the hurkára, or messenger camels with my train, was trotted off rapidly in the direction of the city, to feel for the “peshwáee,” or procession of personages sent to greet me,* as well as to ascertain whether it had yet approached the spot appointed to be our meeting-place, to advance a step beyond which, on their part, would be a breach of etiquette and a lowering of dignity. Soon the camel Gossid reappeared at the same swinging pace. He whispered to the Wakeel riding on horseback at my side, at an understood glance from whom my elephant, which had been marking time the while, was made to step out; and thus, headed by running camels each with a rider, and followed by the escort of red-coated horsemen, my own procession made more way, the phaeton and camel team following in the wake. And now the beating of Nugárchás denoted that the peshwáee had reached the appointed limits. And now too

re-
sonals at
esting.

it was to be perceived grouped under the walls of a garden enclosure, far outside of the city walls. The commander of my escort thereupon passed out to the front—a grotesque ancient, with the exposed back of his head close shaven, long grey locks curling behind both ears, and wearing a black headgear resembling a high smoking cap, with a tassel hanging jauntily on one side. His coat red, pantaloons yellow, appointments black, defiantly armed, on horse of a dun colour, he rode gaily forward as our “Commandant at head-quarters,” to report that all was as it should be on our side. By now he had approached our expectant well-comers, who thereupon pushed forward their three gorgeously arrayed elephants and attendant horsemen and running footmen. As we met, their red-coated cavalry wheeled and formed up in line to the left with drawn swords; my own in like manner drew up to the right facing them. Our respective elephants approached each other through this street with rapid pace. Mine took alarm at being thus charged, in a manner, by so many as three of her kind, and turned round sharp just as hands were extended over the sides of our howdahs for the *dusta-bázee*, or “how-do-you-do?” but being quickly brought up, the salutation and mutual inquiries took place in due course: “Is his Highness in good health?” “The Maharajah hopes you are in perfect condition—Are you all right? Been well provided? Quite sure?” These greetings over, the *peshwáee* turned round with me, and the whole cavalcade proceeded in

joint company. The delegates were the Maharajah's "Prime Minister," named Nármuljee, and another grandee, seated together on an elephant; a fine-looking thakoor or baron, grandly alone on another; and the king's bukshee, or "Chancellor of the Exchequer," obsequiously on the third; all wearing the tall, horn-exalted pugree peculiar to courtiers in Rajpootanah. These head-dresses resemble very much what is seen in sculptured figures of ancient Medes and Persians and Babylonians exhumed at Nineveh. The costume, too, is very similar—long petticoats or gowns reaching to the ankles—a style by the way, nearly followed at home when *Noah's Ark coats* were worn by our young men. My health, theirs, mine and that of the Maharajah, having been again inquired after, and satisfactorily replied to, our elephants next passed through another street formed by the horsemen, and, saluted by them, proceeded onwards. At a point closer outside of the city stood a bravely dressed single horseman, mounted on a richly caparisoned iron-grey—silver trappings and yak tails, from Thibet, hanging from each shoulder, distinguishing the horse—gold chains and ornaments adorning the man. He was the king's "Chamberlain," and he had posted himself at the exact spot at the edge of a broken nullah that marked the city limits, where the "Maharajah himself would have come" to meet me had I been the "Governor-General's Agent." I was now conducted by the city walls over the ridge along a side of which they run, and near by the Maharajah's

fine fortress with its tall palatial buildings of blue enamel rising pre-eminently from its midst, to a plain hard by it where my tents had been pitched side by side of another spacious tent which his Highness had prepared for me. My new friends here dismounted and sat with me for a while under my own shumeeánah, and then took leave, assuring me of "their Maharajah's gladness at my arrival, and that I was only to name my every wish to have it carried out." By-and-by the "Maharajah's special Agent" waited on me, attended by a company of men bearing numerous trays of sweetmeats, sugar-plums, confectionery, almonds, pomegranates, apples and grapes from Affghanistan, and a parched grain highly seasoned with condiments. These had been sent by his Highness.

A huge wolf crossed our way at a short distance Wolves. on the march. Two unsuccessful shots from my carbine rifle hitting the ground close to his feet, set him off into a long-paced gallop—I could not have supposed wolves could run so fast. Although commonly called Bhériahts, and much dreaded for their habit of carrying away children, they are, here about more particularly, termed *Nôhur*, or the special local prodigy or "Tiger"—to be likened to a *Nôhur* or be called "Nohur," the usual name for tiger in other parts of Rajpootanah, being complimentary—for it is said tigers are never met with here, so that wolves have taken their place as well in the fears as in the estimation of the inhabitants.

Rode out at evening on my elephant, through the suburbs and the circuit of the fort walls. A

dry tank, descended on three sides to its sand-laid bed by five flights of stone steps, too surely indicated the difficulty experienced where rain was partial. This want of water would long ago have denuded the place of inhabitants, had not some very large and deep wells been constructed by the wealthy Mahájuns who reside at this far off desert city, and by whose presence it is enriched.

Dinner
from the
Palace.

I had been asked to delay my own dinner hour to enable the king's cooks to serve me with some dishes from the Maharajah's *russórah* or private kitchen, and I had scarcely come back to my tent, when, presently, but not before I had become very hungry, a posse of king's men, escorted by others holding lighted flambeaux, was marshalled in, bearing, swung from poles on men's shoulders as we may suppose the bunches of grapes brought in from the Promised Land to have been, or placed upon monster trays, huge cooking vessels and diverse platters of edibles—food enough to feast a whole company—reeking hot, emitting savoury perfumes—stews, *pillaus* both salt and sweet, *khoormas*, *chetnies*, *náns* or bread-cakes of kinds, a decanter of a strong cordial peculiar to Bikaneer, strong enough to knock you down, and a capsuled bottle of “Mackinnon's ginger brandy” ! I might have died of surfeit, and as it was I passed a sleepless night from merely tasting each dish for politeness sake, the king's attendants looking on to report if I had done so ; but my *approvers* fared sumptuously on the repast on removal from my tent. Bread made from the flour of the *bhurrôte*

seed before mentioned, was also served, but which is only eatable while hot, for it becomes as hard as a tough biscuit directly it has cooled.

23rd January, *Bikaneer* ; halt.—A long brisk walk in the open country at dawn, where I obtained a shot at a fine buck antelope. It is a wonder that deer or any wild animal, should of choice stay in a region where water must be uncertain and always at long distances. The view of the city at sunrise was very fine and engrossing, situated as this capital is, all by itself amid rolling sands. It is extensive, occupying a slightly elevated range of kunkur or limestone formation, and stretching over a long strip of ground. The houses are of substantial appearance, with walls plastered with red earth and flat roofed ; and being closely packed, they look well and city-like within the fortified defences which begird them. The principal inhabitants are Mahájuns, notoriously the richest of all commercial people in India, having agents in every great city throughout Hindustan, and at Skikarpoor in Upper Scinde, Cabool, Candahar, and even in Bokhara and other distant lands, and the Caspian shores. Their hoondies, or bills of exchange, are current in every part of India and in all those remote countries, their transactions being very extensive ; and untold wealth rolls in upon them from every quarter. *Bikaneer* may indeed be said to be the nursery and centre of all the enterprise for which the Sáhoo cars or Mahájuns of India, conventionally designated “*Marwárees*,” have long been famed. They trade even to Zanzibar. Shrewd, calculating, and intelligent, they

The
Mahájuns
of Bika-
neer.

may compare with the cleverest and astutest Rothschilds of the world. To be in the market as early as anyone else, and be possessed with the quickest intelligence of its condition, in respect to sales of opium more particularly, the merchants here dwelling, keep relays of the swiftest camels—and none swifter than those of Bikaner—the whole way across to Ajmere, to which city their agents at Calcutta and at Bombay, communicate by telegraph any changes in the prices of opium and any fluctuations of the money market. The information is forthwith conveyed from Ajmere by the camel-riders, who bring it to their masters at Bikaner within the space of eight “práhurs,” or twenty-four hours, the distance to Ajmere being about 150 miles ; or at the rate of about six miles an hour, a stiff pace for a single camel to cover, considering the sandy ground. These wealthy men also maintain a camel *dák* or post, which starts from the city every evening at eight o’clock. Thus, although residing in an almost unknown region, they in a manner rule the monetary transactions and ride over the opium market of the entire continent of India. And yet, strangely, they themselves individually, have seldom, some never, been anywhere than in Bikaner ! Their dress, at home the finest muslins which ill conceal their persons, but out of doors long coloured tunics, generally green, they are a remarkable people as well in appearance as in their ways. Fat and porpoise-like, and corpulent to a degree, though not all, these plump and burly millionaires, great of

body and with finny arms, may be said to wallow in their dwelling-places at Bikaneer, like so many overfed sacred terrapins or river tortoises, such as may be beheld at Muttra-Bindrâbhun, gorging confusedly and in ferment at the water's surface, upon the bait there thrown down to them by the devout Bunyas of the locality by whom they are maintained. These merchant recluses are, nevertheless, good-natured and jovial-looking, given to bestowing much for charitable purposes, and in alms and other deeds of kindness to Brahmins, to their own chief priests more especially, and in gifts and endowments to religious institutions, these being numerous as well in Bikaneer as in other parts of Rajpootanah. Abroad, which they seldom personally are, they may not be so benevolent; that is to say, their agents abroad, are not, I believe, known to "cast their bread upon the waters" in that way in their masters' names. It is *at home* in their native city, that they compound for their shortcomings elsewhere. And why not? Charity begins at home!

I was waited on in the afternoon by Nârmuljee, ^{Visit to the} accompanied by the wukeel attached to me, to ^{Palace.} signify the Maharajah's wish to receive a visit from me, and that he would have it conducted in the same manner as when he was visited by Sir Henry Lawrence as Governor-General's Agent for Rajpootanah; that the same etiquette would be observed in escorting me to the Palace; by what personages I should be met on arrival there; at what moment he would himself appear to meet

The Shoe
Question.

me ; the distance I should sit from his guddee ; the form of salutations, etc. : and, as if very casually, it was added that where his Highness left his slippers, at the edge of the reception carpet, I should leave my shoes. I felt it necessary to object to this, saying it was not now usual for British officers of Government to do so ; that I was very unwilling to do anything that was not in accordance with the Maharajah's wishes, who had treated me with so much civility and profuse hospitality, but that I was bound to conform with the practice of my Government, and not lay myself open to an imputation of my having transgressed its sense of propriety on such occasions ; that the " shoe question " had been much discussed in the public newspapers ; and that whatever the custom of the native courts, it was thought not to be correct for us nowadays, to divest ourselves of our shoes, seeing that we uncovered our heads when we entered a house, which the natives did not do and were not required by us to do, etc. They said that ———, Political Agent at ———, had taken off his shoes when visiting this court a time back. I suggested that if etiquette was likely to be involved by my objection, his Highness had better dispense with the ceremony of receiving me in open Durbar, but distinguish me with a private audience only keeping his slippers on ; but that if the officer alluded to, had really taken off his shoes, I would, if his Highness made it a *sine qua non*, also do so. After this the visitors left me.

24th January (Bikaner).—I awoke not satisfied

that I ought to concede the point ; but, the matter got settled by the arrival this morning of Captain Coleridge from Mount Aboo. He is the only European in the service of the Maharajah of Bikaner, and is employed, not only as a general referee, but more particularly for the suppression of dacoitie—a kind of auxiliary assistant to myself indeed, in that capacity, but acting independently. He had attended the late Durbar at Agra, and accompanied us in Colonel Eden's camp as far as Ulwur, but had left it there on being suddenly summoned to his mother's deathbed at Aboo. He left Ulwur hastily on camel-back, but with all his expedition he was unable to arrive in time, his mother having been even buried two days previously ; and he had now, at the Maharajah's request, hastened down from Aboo to meet me here. After seeing me, Coleridge explained at once to the Maharajah, that it was positively forbidden that British officers should take off their shoes at native courts, and he now informed me that it would not be required. They were wont, he said, *to try to put it on*, and that the delegates had been merely endeavouring to see how far I would accede ; also that the officer they had exampled, had not in point of fact taken off his shoes at his Highness's Durbar. The subject was not again broached when the minister a second time visited me to-day.*

* P.S.—When Sir James Outram was Resident at the court of the Ameers of Scinde at Hyderabad, I commanding his escort of Scinde Irregular Horse, to which I then belonged, and I accompanied him on a ceremonial visit to the palace within the fortress of the Talpoor Prince, Meer Nusseer Khan, the principal ruling

Proces-
sion to
the
Palace.

But the discussion had occasioned a delay in my reception, and it was not till nightfall that the deputies, attended by elephants and a full retinue, came to my camp to conduct us both to the Palace. Captain Coleridge sat with me on one of the elephants, the Maharajah's ministers occupied the other, and we together proceeded to the fort, the procession being lighted by men bearing flaring flambeaux fixed upon long iron tridents. By the full light of these, we beheld as we passed into the inner gateway, the impressions of several uplifted hands upon the doorposts on either side. They denoted the handmarks, affixed by themselves as they went on, of the palace queens and slave girls who had passed out by that gate on their way to perform suttee when their lords had died—a frightful and cruel rite and ordeal, now, thank Heaven, no longer permitted.

Ameer, we both were required to take off our shoes. We attended to the request and left them in the vestibule of the presence chamber, the Resident his dress shoes, and myself my jack-boots, it being in those days, court etiquette in India to do so—the custom prevailing indeed, to a much later period at the court of the Nizam of the Deccan, descended as it had to us from the Elizabethan period, when Sir Thomas Roe, the British Ambassador deputed by the Queen to the court of the Emperor Jehangir at Ajmere, was required to do likewise—but I felt that we cut but sorry figures when ushered thus divested, and in stocking feet only, into the august presence. We were received, however, in a very courtly and gracious manner by the Ameer. He died soon after, solemnly leaving his family to Outram's special care—a touching scene and graphically reported by Sir James to the Government of India. The event was coincident with the surrender to us in Afghanistan of Dost Mahomed Khan, and but shortly before the co-regnant rulers of the deceased Talpoor Prince, were deposed, their country annexed, and themselves ruthlessly exiled.

It was too dark, and the torchlights too flickering, distinctly to make out the specialities of the architecture of the place after we had entered the palace square, but the buildings had the usual appearance of Rajpoot royal residences. A finely-trellised corridor of carved stone, was filled with spectators looking down upon us as our cortège drew up. On our dismounting from our elephants we were greeted at the foot of a broad stone staircase leading up into the palace by the chief minister and other principal officers, and by them were conducted by a covered passage up several flights of stairs, through an inner square, paved with marble, and containing some dry cisterns and silent fountains, and sundry small shrubs. At the farther skirt of this space, we were met by the Maharajah himself, who, taking Captain Coleridge and myself cordially by either hand, led us through several passages and pillared rooms, to an apartment composed of arches resting on columns of marble, where stood a large State Chair of shining silver. Upon this *sella curulis* the king sat down, and myself on a decorated chair on his right, Captain Coleridge being similarly seated next beyond me. We were the only persons permitted to sit down in his presence, all his courtiers standing behind him, and among them his half-brother, born of a royal concubine. Flambeaux borne on tridents, lighted up the chamber from either end of an open terrace to our front. The conversation was confined to the usual civilities, for I reserved "suppression matters" for another occasion. On my thanking

Interview
at the
Palace.

the Maharajah for his hospitality, he said it was only of the poor nature "his desert capital" could possibly furnish; that Bikaner was just a *tápoo* or oasis only—but thinking he carried his meaning to likening it to a place of banishment, the expression "*tápoo*" commonly among natives signifying *transportation to our penal settlements*, I replied, that there were similar *tápoos* or oases in other deserts, where men used anciently to be banished to—instancing that of Jupiter Ammon (their Vishnu,) in the Syrian desert, known as Siwah at the present date, where all who reached it, found comfort and rest from the difficulties and privations of the dreary way. He smiled at this, but did not quite understand the implied compliment, until it was explained to him by Captain Coleridge, that I meant that his was indeed a "*tápoo*" to which the exiled would always be happy to be sent, and to be able to go to which, men would even commit crime if that were a passport to it. The Maharajah's name is Sirdar Singh. Although limping a little from an affection in one of his legs, he is very dignified and withal perfectly gentlemanly, and he would have borne favourable comparison with any of the chieftains assembled at the late Durbar at Agra, an assemblage he did not attend on account of the great distance and the attendant expenses of so long a journey. He looked a little worn and older than he really is, but this has given him a softened expression of countenance that added considerably to the fascination of his deportment. With the exception of Salar

Jung, the excellent Minister and “admirable Crichton” of Hyderabad, I know no native who is so much a gentleman in manner as is this Rajah of remote Bikaner.

The interview over, we were conducted back, first by himself, to the extreme verge of the landing, and then by his courtiers from stage to stage of the limits prescribed to each by court rules, till we had reached our elephants; mounting which we proceeded home by torchlight formally escorted. The Rajah wore the long court garment before described, and a tall mitre-like head-dress, and sundry gold chains, finger-rings, and a finely-hilted dagger at his waist. He kept his rich slippers on, but did not display them to his courtiers, as I observed that he persistently concealed them in the folds of his long robe.

The
Maha-
rajah's
Costume.

25th January.—Ice in our water-pots! A long ramble at dawn of three hours in the open country with my gun. Saw several antelope, and a *rara avis*, a superb oobárah or bustard, held in high estimation here, as I remember the bird was by the Ameers of Scinde. I was unable to stalk the one I saw, and should have been mounted on a camel for the purpose. But few people, all of the poorer sort, were to be seen at the early hour I started. They were going singly or in small parties, along the different tracks leading out of the city in the direction of the distant villages, some upon camels, others on foot, for brushwood or dry sticks; after I had passed away from whom, the solitude of the unsheltered expanse was imposing—not

Desola-
tion round
the City.

a sound to be heard through the reigning stillness. The aspect and the idea thus created of the massed city, standing out prominently in the midst of a silent wilderness that extended, it might be said, to its very gates, was that of a City of the Dead. Then I came, too, occasionally, as I roamed about, upon the skulls and remains of human forms, that had been dragged out from graves and devoured by wolves and jackals.

26th January, Bikaner.—Struck camp and sent it off, with my office establishment and followers, to proceed to Sirsah, eleven stages distant, there to await me, the Maharajah having proposed to lay a camel dák for me to that point of the British frontier, a distance of eighty-seven miles. In the meanwhile I have moved to Coleridge's house. Later in the day we went about the city on an elephant, visiting the quarter occupied by the Mahájuns; also the monasteries and temples of the Juttees, the Gosaens, and other communities, an account of whom would be very interesting.

Juttees
the
no.

In respect to the "Juttees," particularly, they are supposed to have descended from the Getæ of the Oxus, whom Alexander the Great fought 2000 years ago and was probably more or less opposed by, down in these very regions, if the tradition be true that the Sutledge flowed in this direction, and that his line of march, across to Scinde, lay this way after contest with Porus.⁵

⁵ P.S.—The expressions "Porus" and "Pharaoh" would seem to have signified, not the names of any individuals thereby referred to, so much as the Prince or *ruling Power* of the country at the

27th January, Sunday.—A smart walk in the open country at dawn to nullify the effects of the dainties supplied by the Rajah last night, among which wild boar artistically cooked, and served up with the crackling in a semi-jellified condition, is a dish worthy of imitation by any *chef*. My host, Coleridge, is also most hospitable. We went to-day to a famous well several hundred feet deep, and revetted to its bottom with masonry. Its spacious orifice was surrounded by a protecting wall partitioned off into distinct compartments; troughs, channels and drawing gear, being provided to each segment for the use of the different castes resorting to the well. The construction was the gift of a charitable local sect styled the Ullukkee.

28th January.—We were driven to-day at a rapid pace in a phaeton drawn by four postillioned horses to Gujnêre, a retreat situated fifteen miles distant in the desert, where the Mahârajah has a palace. Half-way was a large reservoir of masonry, for the refreshment of people on their way to Bikaner during the sultry weather, but where there was not a single habitation. It was, too, just now dry, but it fills during rainy weather from the rain-fall filtering and percolating into it

Desert
Palace.

period adverted to—and our own word “power” plainly leads up to such a meaning of them, as the word foreigner does, by the way it is spelt, of the generic term Furrung or Frank, or “Feringee,” as Europeans are called in India. For further resemblance between the Juttees, Jits, Jutturs, &c., and the Getæ and Massagetæ of Herodotus, the curious reader is referred to the footnotes at pp. 62, 529, and 573 of vol. i. of Tod’s *Rajasthan*.

through the adjacent sand slopes. Gujnere itself, consists simply of a somewhat low, flat-roofed "bungalow" of no pretensions, the numerous open arched entrances into it being screened by thick and heavy quilted cotton curtains of striped colours, the several apartments, too, being of a very ordinary kind and bare of decoration. One of these rooms was set apart for us. The structure is situated within a very poor garden, a temple close by being in another piece of garden ground, also a small tower near to a couple of tanks of water. The position lies under a low range of black iron-stone. The Mugrô or famous ridge at Delhi, similarly composed, is declared to be a continuation of the same range, cropping up at intervals above the surface of the interlying country. A low jungle of *bhêre* and other desert shrubs, skirts the locality. It gives cover to numerous wild hog, which come down to the tanks daily for water, and to waste or devour any cultivation within the circuit of their sallies. The second sheet of water was occupied by flocks of wild duck and teal, of which we shot several. The day was cloudy, and latterly even sultry. The Maharajah occasionally keeps his *râwula* or *zenâna* at this desert palace. The ladies were said to be well watched when here, owing to its facilities; but that if any suspicion was aroused, "neither party would be heard of any more," they would simply disappear. We were driven back at evening at the same rapid pace, the parts of the road where the sand lay heavily, having been scraped away preparatory to our ex-

The
Mugrô
or Delhi
Ridge.

Zenana
Seclusion.

cursion, so scrupulously thoughtful being our royal entertainer !

29th January, Bikaner.—The morning cloudy and not nearly so cold at dawn as yesterday. The wells at Bikaner number thirty-five, the water in each of which lies at a very great depth. They are farmed out, and constituted drawers are appointed to each, who exact a small payment for every vessel of water served out, except from very poor persons. These contractors are compelled to work the wells with their own cattle and gear, and without intermission or excuse, an engagement which must be very hard to fulfil during very sultry weather. The Ullukkya sect, by whom the latter well before described was constructed, is a religious community of comparatively recent formation. It professes to maintain and possess everything in common. Its principal ministers, of whom the old father of the Maharajah's Dewán, or Prime Minister, is the chief, openly, and I am assured, really retire from life and its enjoyments, forsaking wives and family, and giving away their property and possessions broadcast. They must, by their vows, become perfectly and completely unworldly ; but lay members may continue with their occupations. It is a system of pure Deism, and so unyielding are its professors, that if a forsaken wife should beseech one of the stern lot, as the wife of the old Dewán did, to return to his family, to remember her and their children, she is thereupon at once addressed by him as "mother," which she too surely knows to signify

The Wells
at Bika-
neer.

The Ulluk-
kya Sect.

Obdurate
Ascetic.

the abandonment of all hope of renewed association.⁶

Traders
from Aff-
ghanistan.

30th January, Bikaner.—Several Affghan traders or “pôwindas” (foot travellers), have arrived to-day with a kâfilah of horses, yaboos, and dried summer fruits. They came down by the Dera Ismael Khan and Bhâwulpore routes. We looked at their yaboos, or chârgôshees as they are called, from the habit of slitting the ears of these small animals when first foaled. They have also brought down cuttings of pistâcheo and other fruit trees of Affghanistan (*vide* p. 24.)

Post Office
Ruling.

In writing to-day to Mr. Yule, Resident at Hyderabad, on the subject of my late reference to the Private Secretary, about requiring compensation from native rulers for Post Office losses (*vide* p. 134,) I said the measure was a very distasteful one, and that the recent decision upon a remonstrance on the subject from the Bombay Government, direct-

⁶ P.S.—“Determined upon renouncing the world, they first renounce the ties that bind them to it, whether family, friends, or fortune, and placing their wealth at the disposal of the deity, stipulate only for a portion of the food dressed for him, and to be permitted to prostrate themselves before him till their allotted time is expired.” (Taken from Tod’s account of the devotees at the temple at Nathdwâra near Odeypore, “the most sacred of the fanes of Kânya, the Hindoo Apollo,” vol. i. p. 521.) Memo : But in the case of the individual ascetic mentioned in the text, though he devoted much money to charities, and to the construction of the wells at Bikaner, he thoughtfully enough left the bulk of his wealth to his son, our friend, Nârmuljee, who succeeded him in the office of Dewan or Prime Minister to the Maharsjah.*

* H had become *Bânpoorsht*, the third degree of ascetic probation, the fourth and last admitting the devotee to the grade of *Sunnâsi* and claim to the reward of *Makht* or Heaven.

ing that the amount paid in be kept as a "reserve fund," seemed inconsistent with the declared object of the rule, namely *compensation*: "The Post Office rules prohibiting any compensation to senders of articles of value by the post, upon whose account can that levy be said to be exacted, if not taken for the purpose of compensating someone with? Surely it was not meant that Government should be the compensated party?"

And upon the subject of the late rescue of prisoners from our custody at Jalnah (*vide* p. 29,) I mentioned to Yule how much the occasion had thrown us out. Jalnah lies within the political charge of the Hyderabad Residency, and I had directed Captain Ward to commit those men for trial to that politico-criminal court. The rescue was boldly planned and was carried out, we now believe, by a noted Rhatore leader, named Kishen Sing. Captain Ward writes of it: "The event is a misfortune, the more so because we are unable to account satisfactorily for its occurrence. I did not suppose such an adventure would be attempted, and I cannot believe with the precautions adopted they could have got away, but for the assistance of those in whose custody they were." He was mistaken in this. According to information here whispered, the sentinels were silenced, dumbfounded it is said, by the sudden apparition in the dead of night, of armed men threatening instant death if they stirred; the outer wall was climbed, the door laid open from inside, the fetters (already partially filed

The recent
rescue at
Jalnah.

through,) knocked off, and away fled awaiting camels with the four liberated men and their rescuers seated upon them ! The occasion resembles the famous escape from the Thannah Fort, near Bombay, of Trimbuckjee Danglia, the Mahratta state prisoner, whom a band of gallant horsemen carried off on a fleet charger kept at hand near the spot, as commemorated by Bishop Heber in some remembered lines read in his journal on my voyage out from home as a cadet :

“ Behind the bush the bowmen hide, :
 The horse beneath the tree ;
 Where shall I find a knight will ride
 The jungle paths with me ?
 There are five and fifty coursers there,
 And four and fifty men ;
 When the fifty-fifth shall mount his steed
 The Deccan thrives again.”

Learning here—for the vein of information of the
 dacoits raiding from these regions far and near,
 and of their co-partnery, runs in this direction
 from the remotest points—that a celebrated
 character of the association long playing a double
 part down in the Central Provinces, named Jee-
 wun Sing, had got himself taken on in the
 Nagpore police, as some other leading robbers
 had likewise done in the Agra and other police
 forces, I write to Colonel Taylor, chief of the
 Nagpore Police : “ Is it so ? For I should be glad
 to know that the fellow is at least under some
 kind of surveillance. When I was lately at
 Hyderabad, my information was that he was under
 heavy security in some case of dacoitie in that

Dacoits
and their
Police
Con-
federates.

Police
Con-
federates
Jee-wun
Sing and
Obout-
null.

direction. His great chum and coadjutor Choonee or Chôté Láll, is, I know, similarly employed in the Berar Police—*Arcades ambo* : ” and I suggest that this Jeewun Sing probably knows all about the rescue, and where the fugitives might be found. This man’s complicity with dacoits had been recorded by our approvers in several cases of dacoitie, and a general number been assigned to his name in our register of “ wanted ” dacoits.

We have to-day information of a dacoitie on the 8th of this month, on a sunga or consignment of opium, despatched from Indore upon carts for conveyance to Bombay. It was attacked at midnight, when alighted at the head of the Simrólé Ghát or Pass, a stage out of Indore, and a lot of opium carried off. Five of the plunderers were arrested by the patrol the following night, while conveying the opium to the house of a well-known confederate and receiver, named Hurgoolal Maistree, who resides within the Residency limits at Indore, their leader, Khêma, being one of them. They are Môghyas, a criminal tribe of whom we ^{Opium Dacoitie near Indore.} Môghyas. have not yet made any approvers, and I shall now, I hope, be at length able to include this race in our general operations. Môghyas are not the least formidable of the dacoit associations we have to look after. They chiefly reside in the direction of Neemuch in Meywár.

We also here learn of a dacoitie said to have been lately committed so far off as Mysore, by a ^{Dacoitie near Mysore.} gang from Rajpootanah, on some treasure while in transit from that place to Bangalore, the name of the plundered party being even given ; and I write

to Mr. Saunders, the Chief Commissioner there, for the particulars—amount looted, 14,000 rupees: “Such is the substance of the report of the occurrence among the Mahájuns of this distant city. We have not received any notice of it from your office.”

Kishen-
Sing.

I have mentioned Kishen Sing as the man believed to have conducted the rescue of our prisoners at Jalnah. He chanches every venture. Here is one of his minor performances, the perpetrators of which lay hidden till now. It was committed not long back on the highway, upon a couple of Sepoys of the Hydrabad Contingent, while proceeding on leave to Ellichapore from Oomraotee (in Berar,) where they were on detachment duty. They had, late at night, reached a nullah some way out, when they were fallen upon by robbers lying in wait for them, but manfully defended themselves, and drove the plunderers off without booty, wounding the leader and another (a nephew of one of our approvers), although being themselves disabled and badly wounded, a hand of one having been cut off at the wrist. This man survived, but the other Sepoy died from the effects of a blow upon his head that reached the brain. He deposed before death : “I belong to the 5th Hydrabad Regiment, and I had lately returned from a furlough to Hindostan. I and my cousin had obtained a short leave to visit the cantonment at Ellichapore, and we together left Oomraotee yesterday evening. I was mounted on our baggage pony, and my cousin was on foot a few paces to my front, when we were suddenly attacked at a

Plunder
of two
Sepoys on
furlough.

nullah which crossed our road about three miles from Oomraotee. I shouted at them, got off the pony, and striking out at them with my sword, wounded one of their number. He ran away, and I followed him, but coming back I found my companion on the ground defending himself against another man, who was cutting at him. I cried out to this fellow that I would kill him, whereupon he turned and aimed a blow at me. I endeavoured to parry the stroke with my sword, but failing, the blow descended upon my head. I cut at him at the same time, but my sword had got bent, and I don't know whether it hit him or not. The robbers ran away. I searched for my pony, and finding it, went to a neighbouring village, where I told the people of it of my companion lying wounded outside. At first they would not stir out, but they afterwards brought him in. The wound on my head is bad and very painful. If it heals I shall recover, but not otherwise." The gang was a mixed one, numbering seven persons.

We visited to-day the celebrated Jain ^{Jain} ^{Templo.} "mundur" or Temple of Parisnath ("Purswānāth,") and ascended nearly to its perilous summit. It is traditioned to have been erected 375 years ago. In a conspicuous place within the building, were four polished figures sculptured in marble, representing Boodh in his several phases of meditation, in a sitting posture, back to back. The composure was well conceived. But the fetish in another Boodhist temple of equal celebrity, where the Juttees worship, was of colossal

Juttee
Place of
Worship.

The
King's
own
"Surna."

Juttee
Monas-
tery and
Convent.

Juttees.

dimensions, a triform Boodh, carved out of the purest white marble obtained from the quarries of Mukránah. This huge triality, was supported on either side by twelve smaller Boodhs, six on each, all seated in the same reposeful attitude, and graduating in size from large to very small. Nearly adjoining this building was another sacred precinct. It might not be invaded—it was the King's surna or sanctuary and inviolate, and was ministered by Brahmins. I was next conducted to a Juttee monastery, set apart for the male portion of that community, the aged head priest of which showed us an ancient map, grotesquely representing the world and Kailass, as conceived from the account given thereof in their Pooráns and Vedas. From there we went to a convent devoted to the opposite sex of the same curious people. The members of both of these institutions were away, occupied in their daily ministrations among the Mahájuns belonging to the great Ooswál sect of Boodhist worshippers. Two or three ancient priestesses were, however, present in the convent. Both sexes of this strange community, profess celibacy, and are habited in white garments. It was whispered that they mutually bore a questionable character, the men for intriguing among the ladies, and the women oppositely, in the families of their benefactors, the Ooswalee Mahájuns and Bunyas, by whom chiefly they all are maintained.⁷

⁷ The Oswáls or Ossis, so named from Ossa, a town in Marwar, from where they spread, constitute a very numerous family of Jain or Boodhist sectarians, men possessed of great mercantile wealth.

They both write and read. The Juttee women particularly write very beautifully, as clear as steel print, and many of them are in consequence employed to keep the accounts of rich folk, which they do with great exactitude, or write the letters of the poorer votaries. Another remarkable sect of the same marriage-forswearing people, are the Dhoondias, who, like the others, also dress in white. These most inviolately avoid taking life, with which object their women more particularly studiously defend their mouths with a square piece of white muslin, fastened behind their ears, lest perchance they should accidentally destroy life while inhaling breath! The Dhoondias, however, observe a very objectionable peculiarity. They refrain from ablutions, and are in the habit of picking up and eating every kind of rejected food (seldom found meat excepted,) burying, like dogs, what is over and above until again hungry; and they drink refuse water. There is a way with their women of warning *cicisbeos* "to look out for themselves"—yet despite of this, they are not without admirers among their Ooswálee supporters. The women of both sects are often very good-looking, with embrowned but not too dark complexions. The men, on the contrary, though sleek, are generally very dark. Juttee males go about bare-headed, with their long black glossy hair carefully combed out, as opposed to the short disheveled hair and entangled locks of the Dhoondias.

They abound throughout Rajasthan, residing numerously in Bikaner.

Maisrees
and
Gosaens.

The
Jeypore
Rajah
and the
Gosaen
High
Priest.

Maisree is the designation of a sect of the Mahájuns and other traders of the place, who worship Shiva, the "destroyer," as the Gosaens also do. Maisrees consequently pay great reverence to Gosaens, who, *pour l'acquit* exercise the same clandestine influence over their women which is attributed to the Juttees over those of the Ooswáls. At the present time the Maisrees have a great notability among them on a visit to Bikaneer, in the person of the chief "Mahunt" or Pontiff of the Gosaen sect, who had lately withdrawn himself in high dudgeon from Jeypore, where he and his predecessors had long most sumptuously resided. The Jeypore Maharajah had suggested to him that it would be more in conformity with the declared sanctity of his office and professions, if he would adopt a less luxurious mode of life, and assume the usual garb of a religious devotee, with the customary string of roodráksh beads about his neck, and a rosary in his hand, and further, restrict himself to the simplest diet. And upon this the Maharajah seemed desirous to insist. The holy man declined to attend to these remonstrances, and upon the invitation of the Maharajah of Bikaneer had lately removed to this court, with his family and all his wealth, and by so acting has gained the sympathy of all the other princes of Rajasthan. He has taken up his "pontifical residence" in a spacious mundur, enclosed by high walls situated close outside of the Fort—a large building erected and magnificently embellished and maintained by the

Maharajah. It is stated that the latter lavished vast funds from his own private means in its construction, for he has a privy purse. In this fane the abbot is daily visited by the Maisrees, who, both men and women, rich and poor, daily flock to prostrate themselves before him, particularly the women, and to worship him, presenting offerings which are often valuable, and are always accepted. Should he even not show himself, it is enough that they have been to his abode to offer adoration, and have left their gifts there. But should he, as oftener, receive their adulations in person, and by way of distinction expectorate on individual hands, or besprinkle spittle on the crowd, they will even lick it up with reverence, and consider themselves blessed by the opportunity. But this is not all, for these hierophants, will, like the Bullubcháry^s Maharajahs of recent infamous notoriety at Bombay, and whom in many ways they much resemble, sometimes incline towards some one of the female votaries in the crowd, and *assign* her accordingly. Nor will the one so beckoned consider any sin to attach for consenting, but rather that she is highly distinguished—nor their similarly impressed husbands dissent! And should the chartered libertine, on the other hand, elect to visit

* P.S.—This was the designation given to the sect throughout the great trial of this infamous “high priest,” in the High Court at Bombay, presided over by the learned Sir Joseph Arnould. The proper appellation would be “Balábhi-Achárec,” or religionist of Balábhi, the ancient city of Meywar, the asserted cradle of the Jain or Boodhist faith.

their abode, he has but to leave his slippers at the door of the woman's apartment, to be left undisturbed within it ! So thus these Gosaen Abbots flourish, and "lie with the women in the temple," no one restraining them. There is need of a High Court of Justice here like that which at Bombay recently exposed and checked a similar abomination there.

Gosaen
Monas-
tery-cum-
Bank.

Yet another "Gosaen" monastery at Bikaner, is still more curious. It is both a place of worship and a bank—at once a temple and a stall of money-changers ! Its residents are its priests, as they are at the same time its bankers, keeping wahees or ledgers, and other numerous account books, with the greatest precision and fidelity, every entry in them, and every alteration—a rare occurrence among native bankers—being attested with the signature of the Abbot-Manager himself. Their hoondies, or bills of exchange, are negotiable in every part of India. It is a remarkably strange institution. The transactions recorded in its ledgers, may be traced back, from volume to volume, to the earliest period of its establishment ; and, although holding the fullest command of the vast wealth said to be accumulated in its vaults, or absorbed in its extensive banking negotiations—the deposits of numerous constituents, from the local Maharajah downwards—they have the character of the strictest good faith in the discharge of the great business : so scrupulous are they, indeed, that they feed themselves at their own expense even on licensed festival occasions, and regulate the ex-

penditure of the establishment, with the utmost frugality and economy. Every member of the important concern, is a Gosaen—all clustering in the same edifice and performing their monastic devotions within its walls. In the matter of their household expenses, they have one and the same bill of fare, the same articles of diet, for every corresponding day of the year, counting back to the earliest period—just as our weekly school fare used unswervingly to be—the fractions of food purchased to-day, having been provided on the same date last twelvemonth and of every preceding year! With such self-denial and imposed restraints, with so much care and prescription, the commercial character of the institution may be supposed to be perfect; but whether these excellent bankers and accountants, are the same admirable leaders and instructors of the people in the exercise of the ghostly side of their office, or pursue the same loose courses among their sectarians which “Gosaens” generally have a reputation for, I was not informed; but I must make this observation in their favour—the Gosaen as a Sepoy, is distinguished for bravery and a recklessness born of his fanaticism, which will conduct him to the most daring enterprise. A corps inclusively of Gosaens, or one that may be readily formed from Gosaen companies distributed among our regiments of native infantry, would be an acquisition on occasions of arduous service and required dash. In point of *moral* character they will at least compare favourably with Afreedees,

The
Gosaen
Sepoy.

notoriously among our most stout-hearted of native troops.

Dinner at
the
Palace.

At evening after dark we dined at the palace, in a finely gilded chamber, decorated profusely with designs in gold, the ceiling studded with small mirrors or reflectors curiously interwrought, the several arches composing it being supported by marble pillars highly embellished with ornamentations in gold, a large and artistically canopied recess scooped out in the retaining wall, occupying a central position as a receptacle for a throne when the Maharajah should give audience there in state. After we had been conducted by appointed courtiers through the intricacies of the palace and its succession of floors, we were at length met by the Maharajah himself, at the edge of a marble-paved terrace at, as before, exactly the prescribed spot, and were taken by him in the first place to the same audience apartment where he had received us on the previous occasion ; where, after he had dismissed everyone, I had a private interview with him.

Private
Inter-
view.

I asked him, in view to make the service more popular, to direct that his own special girraée, or suppression establishments, be regularly paid ; also to insist on reports of the occurrence of dacoitie or other heinous crime, within the limits of Bikaneer territory, being promptly made to Captain Coleridge, his own appointed chief of the special local agency ; and, as it was that gentleman's birthday, and he had held the rank of Captain in his Highness's service for now quite six years, I further suggested his promotion to

“Major.” This the Maharajah assented to, and promptly announced it to him in a neat speech before the assembled courtiers, after he had conducted us to the banqueting hall. He then retired, leaving us to ourselves with those appointed to attend us, after personally seeing that everything had been supplied, and a liberal number of bottles of wine duly ranged for us on a sideboard. The table indeed groaned with the numerous viands of every sort his attendants served up. Some of the dishes were in imitation of English courses, an old khánsámán, who had been in the service of English gentlemen, being kept up for such special occasions. Of wine there was “Champagne,” supplied by some rogue from our cantonment at Nusseerabad; port wine, whiskey, and the Bikaner cordial before mentioned. After the repast, three *troupes* of nautch girls were ushered in, all good-looking and elegantly apparelled, who “danced” on an open terrace to our front. They sang very engagingly, in a style not usual among this class in other parts of India, and certainly with more reserve and delicacy than the *túifas* we had lately seen at Ulwur, well appointed as these also were. All owned, we were told, distinct “protectors,” “who clothed and fed them and took great care of them,” and to whom they were declared to be loyal while so maintained. They were also in the king’s pay as *devi-dússees* or temple dancers—coryphées—on fixed allowances for state and ceremonial occasions, and formed a part of the usual court establishment. One of their performances was of a very graceful

Nautch
Girls.

**The Rás-
mundla
Dance.**

nature. It cannot be described as a "dance" rather than as a succession of easy classical movements, or gentlest oscillations so rather to describe them, with never an approach to inelegance—such as might indeed be witnessed in a drawing-room minuet, or we might suppose the Dryads or Nymphs of Coreyrus to have occasionally joined in. This particular "set" was peculiar. On the floor, in the centre of the group of young women standing in a circle round her, gracefully sat one of the troupe, elected for her greater beauty, who, to the sound of a small cylindrical drum placed beside her, beaten softly with her hands in well-observed cadence, in a low voice sang a murmuring sort of refrain, the encircling girls repeating it after each brief verse of the selected lay, as they slowly moved with measured tread around her, chanting together the while in the same subdued tone of the muffled melody, and conforming with the strain of it (it was rather a plaintive air,) by rhythmical arrangements of their bodies, and in sustained consonance therewith by simultaneously timing the motions with their feet, set as these were round about the ankles with tiny silver bells; now throwing out their jewelled arms, now holding them for a while uplifted in unlaboured attitude, slowly gyrating at intervals rather than pirouetting, with graceful dignity; now bending low with down extended arms, now casting themselves erect as gracefully, as each passed by in stately succession at preserved distances from each other and in order—not tumultuously, nor independently, but all reconcile-

ably with the emotions excited by the chaunt and with the expression communicated to it by the bright figure lowly seated in their midst—and withal, so softly and with so much dignified grace, that I question any other performance of dance and song surpassing it in charm and elegance, or for attractiveness. Some of these Báyadéres were of almost fair complexion, not one was repulsively dusky, and they did not chew “pánsoopári” (betel nut and pán leaf,) as the nautch women of Lower India are in the unseemly habit of doing when publicly performing. All were tastefully attired in pure white robes of the finest texture, the ample folds of which now swelled out and expanded, or now contracted or convoluted, in flow with the music of the song and the movements engendered by it :—

“ mazes intricate,
Eccentrick, intervolved, yet regular
Then most, when most irregular they seem ;
And in their motions harmony divine.”

This added greatly to the enchantment of the fairy-like spectacle.* Nor was their apparel un-

* P.S.—These graceful displays have been described by some as dreams ; and not inaptly of such as I have above storied ; for the hold they had upon the fascinations of one Eastern nation at least, was creative of a word by which only, it would seem, they were able to express the idea it conveyed. In the Javanese language, the word *shumpee*, or *srumpes*, signifies a “dream,” or “vision of the night,” and that term there designates a *dancing girl* ! “In the course of the evening we were entertained by an exhibition of a more interesting nature. Two sets of *shumpees*, of four each, belonging to the Emperor, performed a most graceful dance before us. Their youth, their beauty, the elegance of their motions, modesty of looks, and richness of dress, excited our

substantial, like the gossamer attire of dancing women elsewhere in India, or their poses any more than the words of the guzzuls or rāgas (odes,) which they sang, at all *suggestive* like theirs—for which reason, quite as much as for their uncomeliness, jarring voices, unbecoming ways, and ill-disguising vestures, the latter are so much shunned and cried down by Europeans—but, on the contrary, here all was decorum and of the strictest propriety, and the person so veiled, that, although some do object to ballet spectacles, an affectation prevailing at Calcutta, where many boxes are cleared out when that performance commences (there, always at the end of an opera,) these would offend no delicacy, nor displease. Certainly an idea might be raised, or an apprehension be present to those who were aware of it, arising from the somewhat questionable domestic relations of these damsels (constituting no disgrace, however, in Eastern estimation when coupled with loyalty,) but there is an innate modesty in an Asiatic spectator which prevents him from giving, by gaze or by gesture, expression to such knowledge in public. He sits gravely looking on or listening, but does so dignified and motionless, in the presence even of ribaldry or indelicacy—how much more when there

admiration; indeed, we only regretted that the 'dream' could not last."—(Taken from "A Tour in Java.") *Shrap* and *supra* in Sanscrit and Hindee both signify a *dream*.

P.S., 1891.—Kingsley, in "Hypatia," well contrasts the movements of the performers in this Grecian dance: "not, as in the coarser comic pantomimes, in fantastic bounds and unnatural distortions, but in perpetual delicate modulations of a stately and self-restraining grace."

is nothing to shock him and much to charm ! I include in this persuasion, the ordinary standard of the native, and not the lower, or *bud-ma'ish*—but for whom too, I will venture to say, from close observation, that I do not think that (however capable from depravity,) they are apt, by reason of that very innate sense of due decorum—I will even call it *self-respect*—publicly and before one another, to conduct themselves towards females in their power, with the brutality which was imputed to them with so many shocking details in the days of the Mutiny—all of which, too, were so much believed in at home.

The particular dance which we witnessed, was the national one of Rajpootanah, a mystic composition called the *Rās-mundla*, and was beautifully executed. It is in great repute among rulers and courtiers, and scarcely a festival of any importance at the various capitals, without an exhibition of it. It was strictly “classical,” and from the mere rhythmical movements of the body, conformed in some measure, we might suppose, with the similar performances of the ancient Helenes.*

The Maharajah now returned, and after inquiries whether we had been properly attended to, and had enjoyed ourselves, he pledged us both in some sherry particularly, a wine he is said to prefer, and wished us prosperity, how glad he had been of our visit, etc. He did not himself drink the toast, “but would do so by-and-by when retired.” The singers being then dismissed, we had some further conversation with him, and he then gave us formal

* P.S.—
The several performers, simultaneously moved from right to left, and then as deliberately from left to right, thus indicating, it is supposed, the strophe and anti-strophe of the ancient astronomical dance, or, the apparent motion of the sun and the moon from east to west, and of the planets from west to east.

Major
Coleridge
offers
Nuzzur-
anah.

rookhsut, or leave to go, by ceremoniously putting some "uttur" on our handkerchiefs, and sprinkling us with rose-water from the usual long-necked silver receptacles called gooláb-páshees, and then accompanied us back to the end of the prescribed limits—not a pace farther—where, on his remitting us to his courtiers, Major Coleridge, bowing respectfully, presented the customary nuzzuranah in acknowledgment of the promotion just conferred upon him. It consisted of a single gold mohur placed on a white napkin, and offered with both hands; which being regarded with condescension in token of acceptance, Coleridge thereupon, with several studied passes about the king's head and person, tossed five rupees down on the lower platform of the landing, where they were picked up by the Furrásh, or royal carpet-spreader in attendance, to whom such perquisites appertain, but the gold coin was transferred to the privy purse. Coleridge went through this formality to make sure, he said, of his promotion to Major being carried out in due form by a regular commission under the Maharajah's sign manual.

Mineral
Productions.

On the occasion of this visit, and because I had made inquiries as to the natural developments of the country, the Maharajah directed that specimens be supplied to me of its mineral productions, as of copper ore, a mine yielding which exists at Birdásir; of *sujjee*, or fuller's earth; of a yellow earth called *mooltánee mitter*; also of any old coins that might be obtainable. I advised him to endeavour to have the long-disused copper-mine

worked, by inviting notice to it in the public newspapers at our Presidencies ; also to send some of the water, both bitter and sweet, singularly yielded by the city wells before mentioned, for analysis at Calcutta and Bombay, by which to ascertain the strata through which it percolated to become thus peculiarly impregnated. For it is a phenomenon, that while sugar-candy manufactured with the water of certain of the wells of the place, is perfectly sweet and white—and none so white and crystalized like Bikaner sugar-candy throughout the land—the candy made with the less palatable water obtained from wells in close proximity, so close as a few paces only from the others, is of a yellow and a soiled hue !

31st January, Bikaner.—Oh ! that glass of sherry—quaffed though it was invoking “health,” it was scarcely wholesome ! Was up later in consequence—yet got up well, though hardly expecting it, and occupied myself in writing up the events of yesterday and matters connected with present intelligence.

For to-day’s information here obtained, is capital. News of
Dacoits.
Two persons, named *Girdhārēe Sing* and his nephew *Ojēin Sing*, have been arrested at Ajmere for endeavouring to defraud the opium Customs, by passing a kuttār or lead of sixty-two camels laden with that drug and falsely declaring that it numbered only sixty ; both men were flogged and held to bail on a proffer of security on the part of the agents at that place of a firm of opium merchants at Bikaner, called the “*Bāgree Sahoocars*,” but

who here repudiated it. Now the former of these two persons I know to be an important dacoit, and the jemadar or head of a gang, of which one of our approvers, named *Jeevun Khan* a Káim-Khánee, now with Blair, was a member. His habit was to commit dacoitie under cover of his ostensible occupation of camel carrier, in which latter capacity he and this approver had long been employed (of which I shall probably have much to say,) by a leading Bikaneer Sahoocar residing generally at Nagpore, with branch establishments at Jubbulpore where I had often seen him, at Hyderabad, Kamptee, and other chief places, acquiring thereby opportunities for planning and carrying out dacoitie in those directions. He was, indeed, accessory, more or less, to most of the acts of plunder of occurrence down in Khan-deish, Berar, and other parts trending that way. Connected with this intelligence I also have it from another person here, that the dacoit abettor Choutmull, or Choonee Láll, who had, as before noticed, been admitted into the Berar police as an inspector (*vide* p. 164,) had now fallen out with the man *Kishen Sing*, the suspect who planned the rescue of Wárd's prisoners at Jalnah (*vide* p. 163,) and had caused his arrest also at Ajmere. The said inspector and dacoit, interchangeable terms it seems in respect of those who, like him, have found places in our police establishments, had lately obtained leave to Rajpootanah, his country, to get married, and he proceeded accordingly, accompanied by *Kishen Sing* and his brother *Hurree Sing* (the

Chout-
mull.

latter being one of the four rescued men ;)—so that I have now come upon the tracks of the fugitives, from an opposite direction ! Choutmull had claims against them in the matter of certain robberies they had committed and he by compact had winked at, and he knew full well, too, that both were “ wanted ” men by our department, for Kishen had also once previously escaped from our custody down in Berar. He declined Choutmull’s demands ; the latter upon this traitorously informed against both on arrival at Ajmere, and Kishen Sing was thereupon arrested, but his brother Hurree Sing is said to have got away. I am thus *in scent* at least, of my game. The quarrel had its origin in a dacoitie which had been prompted upon some treasure at a place called *Ootradapet*, in Berar ; and as all our subsequent information, and the present research and the events connected therewith, may be said to have sprung out of this affair, I here write down the story of it as gathered from the account of it narrated to me by one of the accomplices named *Sadoolla Nacc*. I had acquired the services of this man in this way. Some Meenas of the dacoit fraternity, arrested in Rajpootanah through our agency, had lately been sentenced to transportation for life, of whom *three* had, upon my visiting them at Agra, to where they had been taken *en route* to Calcutta, where to be shipped to the Andaman Islands, accepted to serve us. They were the first and the only approvers of that tribe I had then yet been able to admit to approver-ship, and as a large batch of jail prisoners awaited

A Treas-
ure
Dacoitie.

The First
Meena
Ap-
provers.

Jail Con-
victs con-
fronted
with Ap-
provers.

examination by me, both in Jeypore and at Ajmere—100 at the former place, and ninety-seven at the latter (of whom, that is, of those at Ajmere, as many as fifty-seven had lately been detected by the local police lurking within that city intent upon committing dacoitie, the house of an opulent banker having been selected for the purpose, ten others having been captured in Khandeish for a dacoitie on treasure at *Sowndah*, twenty-seven seized in Meywar, and three received from Goorgaon, a Meena-infested British district,)—I proceeded to both of those places, there personally to confront the whole number with my three men. This was to put the sincerity of the latter, quite new men, to a further test; for each had recorded before me a narrative of his criminal career separately given with full details. In no case did they in these ordeals claim a man not previously denounced in their personal narratives—the names of those they could not speak to, of whom there were very many, could in no instance be detected in those records—and in two instances, the recognized parties were a *brother* of one of them, and a *nephew* of another. This was the result of the investigation of the lot in confinement at Jeypore. At Ajmere the procedure was the same—no one was claimed who had not been previously mentioned in narratives—the majority were not recognized at all—their declared names, too—the names they gave in—could not moreover be detected to have been previously mentioned by any of the three in their respective narratives—and one

claimed man was an *uncle*, and another a *brother* of one of the three—while all were (with seven exceptions,) declared by them to be, as at Jeypore, their own tribesmen—Meenas—all remotely absent from their homes when severally apprehended. It was on this latter occasion at Ajmere, that the above Sadoolla was discovered, whom I have mentioned in connection with the treasure dacoitie at Ootradapet, and I here extract what I reported to government of the incident :—“ The approvers were assailed by the assembled prisoners with taunts, with abuse, with being traitors, to which, with confusion, they submitted, their only reply being that they were unable to trifle, and that only those who should be accepted as approvers could now escape the Sircar. And here one of the number arrested in Khandeish in the Sowndah dacoitie case, and brought out for examination, was recognized by one of the three deponents as his accomplice in a dacoitie of occurrence at *Dhygam*, in Berar, on the night of the 20th February, 1862 ” (upon the house of a Marwáree, booty, 8000 rupees in gold mohurs, gold necklaces, and other jewellery.) “ He was a man of the *Núee* caste from Bikaner, passing himself under a feigned name as a Rajpoot. He had for some time been associated with the Meena tribe in dacoitie, and was, as he himself admitted, either a principal in or cognizant of most of the treasure dacoities which had of late years taken place in Khandeish and Berar, and of those concerned in them, whether principals or abettors ; and it gave

Sadoolla
Núee.

More Ap-
provers
admitted.

me infinite satisfaction when this man, an Apollo in appearance and stature, stooping and putting his hands to my feet, declared his readiness to confess and narrate his whole career. His example was followed by another of the Khandeish batch, while a man previously separately brought down to Ajmere from Jeypore, who had resolutely denied everything, on being now confronted and denounced, *also revealed his whole career.*" Returning with this accession of approvers, to Jeypore, I once more examined the prisoners in the Maharajah's jail there, now numbering 166 persons, of whom eighty-nine were over and above those last seen : "All were confronted with each approver in succession, now six in number, and the results were the same. Several accomplices were detected among them, some being notorious leaders of gangs ; and although, as before, many of these prisoners were personally unknown to the approvers, all nearly, were declared to be *Meena dacoits* ; there were very few exceptions. And here, too, another approver was admitted from the number denounced—one Môhun, a Brahmin, a resident of Jeypore, who had joined Meena gangs of the Goorgaon district, and with them had committed several dacoities in Rajpootanah and in Malwa. His accomplices are numerous."

Story of
the
Dacoitie
at Ootradapet
in
Berar.

Here, then, is Sadoolla's account of the important dacoitie at *Ootradapet*, before adverted to, as connected with the persons of whom I have said I have obtained information here. The carrier,

Girdháree Sing, just taken into custody at Ajmere (for I have no doubt of it,) had engaged to convey the baggage of an officer at Kamptee, from that place to Poonah, from where the officer would go on with it by rail to Bombay. Four was the number of camels so hired out, of which one belonged to Sadoolla himself; the other three to Girdháree, a fellow camel carrier. They were taken on to Kampoolie, at the foot of the Khandálah Ghát, there to await the return of Girdháree's servant, one of the camel attendants, who had gone by rail to Bombay to inquire for a return freight. There he was engaged to convey a remittance of treasure for delivery to a native banker at Nagpore, a person of great local influence among the European community, the same individual pointed to before (*vide* p. 182.) It consisted of thirty to forty ingots of gold, and 40,000 rupees in cash. A further consignment of 8000 rupees in cash, was also to be taken to Nagpore at the same time for some Sahoocars residing at Jalnah. All this treasure, amounting in bulk to 68,000 rupees, was brought up from Bombay by rail to the Khandálah Ghát Station, and there it was transferred to the four camels. A Rajpoot from Bikaneer, named *Júljee*, a treacherous servant of the said Jalnah Sahoocars, had met the treasure convoy, and he forthwith went to the dêra or meeting-place at *Chicklee*, hard by, of a dacoit leader, named *Mulla* alias *Muljee Jút*, a very successful dacoit leader, where several dacoits were assembled. There were dêras

Dacoit
Tryals.

also at *Peepalgam*, on the road to *Kamptee*, and at *Aurangabad*, by the way to *Jalnah*—as also at *Jalnah* itself, where dacoit gangs were also at hand, under the leadership of the two brothers *Kishen Sing* and *Hurree Sing*, both *Játs*, and of another named *Kyum Sing*. The above *Bhêdee* or dacoit scout, *Júljee*, told the robbers that the treasure might readily be plundered, as there was no *Rhatore* escort with the convoy, but only the camel-men. The man *Choutmull*, or *Choté Láll*, since become a police inspector, always on the look-out for news of booty, and at that time staying at *Nagpore*, where he got the knowledge, had also communicated to the gang that four camels laden with treasure and bullion might be looked out for, on the way from *Bombay* to *Nagpore*. The convoy alighted in due course at *Ootradapet*. The dacoits posted at *Chicklee*, set out at night to plunder it, six of their number on ponies, the rest on foot. The man *Muljee* or *Mulla Ját* (he has several aliases,) was their leader, and *Hurree Sing* accompanied him, as also did *Jowahirra Durzee*, another of the four persons rescued from *Ward's* lock-up. Arrived near the village, which was situated at the junction of the *Pein Gunga* and *Ven Gunga* rivers, they picketed their ponies in the shelter of a nullah, and sent over one of their number to watch the camel-men. The spy came back at midnight, and said that they were asleep except one man, who kept watch. The robbers thereupon set forth and fell upon the convoy. They were armed with carbines, pistols, and

swords; they began to fire quickly; two of the camel-men ran away, two were wounded, and one was killed. The dacoits then set fire to some straw, by the light of which they laded the treasure upon the same camels, and went off two or three koss into the jungle, where they transferred the booty to their own ponies and set the camels loose. They subsequently shared the plunder by "lôtahs-full" * and dispersed. Information of their loss soon of course reached the plundered Sahoocars. It came to our ears also at Jubbulpore, where I was and from where I at once despatched detectives to trace the offenders, and entrusted the inquiry to my assistant, Ward, in whose circle the occurrence had taken place. The offenders were traced accordingly, and four of them arrested, of whom one was the leader of the gang; but, owing to a compromise with the robbers on the part of the Sahoocar who had suffered the most in the robbery, they promising to reimburse him twofold if he would forego to prosecute them, he procured their transfer to himself, through his influence with the Naib or local native authority where our detectives had arrested them. Ward hereupon remonstrated about this to the Resident at Hyderabad, Mr. Yule, and the Nizam's durbar thereupon required the Sahoocar to deliver them up. His, that is, the said Sahoocar's employés had meanwhile, brought them to Nagpore, and he there handed them over to another assistant there located. They were eventually tried before the Adawlut, or native court of justice, at Jalnah, and were, as will be seen farther on, sentenced to *kuttul* or

* A lôtah is a brass pot in the possession of almost every native, with which to draw water, &c., and containing about a couple of pints.

decapitation; but before the sentence could be carried out *they rose upon their guard and escaped!* Mulla or Muljee Jat the leader of the gang, and Jowahirra Darzee (one of the four persons lately rescued from Ward's custody,) were of the escaped number sentenced to be beheaded.

Com-
promise
with the
Dacoits.

The compromise above alluded to, is a story of itself, and is intimately connected with my present research. It was effected in this wise. Girdháree Sing, the camel carrier, was at this time in the employment of the said plundered Seth at Nagpore. On the latter receiving the information that the entire treasure had been plundered, he at once deputed Girdháree Sing, to whom three of the camels had belonged, to obtain a parley with the leader of the gang through the man *Jeewun Sing*, he who has lately been admitted into the Nagpore police (*vide* p. 164.) The latter was well known to be in the secret of the dacoits raiding in Berar from the upper countries, and he and one of his assos-
named *Mctee Sing*, *Meena*, had, by reason of this reputation, been taken into custody on suspicion (by Captain Davies, acting as my extra assistant in Berar,) on the first burst of the occasion, and been released. These two persons, Girdháree and Jeewun Sing, now associated themselves with Kyum Sing the dacoit before-
mentioned,* himself a leader, and proceeded to the research, provided with ample means for the expenses of the service, and with permits and other credentials, obtained by the Seth their master, from the local authorities, enjoining all

* v. p. 188.

concerned not to obstruct them—and were by him further assured of more funds, and promised special rewards to each if successful in the pursuit.

But I must here first note something about Jeewun Sing, for he figures a great deal in our information. He was a native of this very Bikaner, but had for some years resided at Oomraotee in Berar, where he kept several camels. His habit was to convey by such means, the specie and other consignments of the Mahájuns round about, to different parts of the country, under the convoy of his own employés. This was his *ostensible* occupation, and he acquired thereby a character for honesty among his employers—for he would not have their property plundered, but under that guise, had the property of others waylaid. For this purpose he leagued himself with a Brahmin from Rajpootanah variously named Choutnull, Chotélall, Chotéram, Chowtea, and Choonee Lal (the same who has been admitted into the Berar Police Force,*) and with a Meena leader named Motee Sing from Nágul in Jeypore Territory (the same who was arrested along with himself for the Ootradapet case.†) These two persons also resided in Oomraotee and were all locally regarded with consideration. Meenas and other robbers, coming down in quest of plunder, would be put up by these two confederates, at a couple of temples outside of Oomraotee (one called Ballájee's Mundur, and the other called Davee's Mundur,) under the story that they had come down in search of service,

Jeewun Sing.

* v. p. 182.

† v. p. 180.

“ which it was the intention of the others to obtain for them ” ; and as Motee Sing also let out camels for the conveyance of goods accompanied by his own employés, there was always information ready to hand, through the consequent intercommunication among the local camel carriers numerous scattered through the country, of the despatch of treasure from the different parts of it. This was communicated to the dacoits, whether at Oomraotee, or at the different other dêras or trysts already indicated. Jeewun Sing, who was the chief man who worked this system, and his two associates, always obtained a regulated share in the plunder that followed thereupon, of which we possess several authenticated instances, the Dacoitie at Ootradapet being one -- a glaring example of the double part played by Jeewun Sing. He was the principal abettor in that case, as also in those near *Mulkapore* and at *Sowndha* (of which anon,) although not an actual accomplice in them. He used even to mess with his friend Motee Sing, although one was a Rajpoot and the other a Meena supposed to be of a much lower social grade. But the latter gave himself out to be, and was by reason of this communion, regarded to be, a Thakoor from *Shekawátee* ; no one looked upon him as a Meena only. I had, when on a previous tour of duty in Berar in 1864, learnt pretty accurately, that Jeewun Sing was the prime mover in many of the heavy robberies at that time of frequent occurrence down there, and I was now confirmed in that information. It is a coincidence, that when

Thuggee raged in the same direction, it was discovered that an influential person residing at Oomraotee, was similarly the chief instigator of many of the cases of that terrible evil perpetrated in those tracts. Some of his employés had been *thugged* and a deal of his own property plundered while under their convoy. He alighted upon the perpetrators, who compromised the matter with him by restoring to him the full and a fuller value of what they had robbed from his murdered people. He soon perceived how easily the amount was made good, and what a profitable business these Thugs carried on! So their jemadars had no difficulty in bringing him round to join them. He thereupon not only became their general *receiver*, but he used to give them information of the despatch from Bombay and other places, of bullion and specie, and of merchandise, the carriers of which they used to waylay and murder, and make over the plunder to him for disposal when consisting of goods, or share with him when of money. Possibly Jeewun Sing has followed the same example; for the circumstance was well known at Oomraotee and Hyderabad, and created a great stir at the time.

To go back to the *compromise* in the present instance: *—On Jeewun Sing and the two persons deputed with him learning that Muljee Ját, the leader of the gang in the Ootradapet case, and the other three men (Jowahirra Durzee, Hêma, and Abbas Khan a Rohilla) had meanwhile been arrested by our detectives from Jubbulpore,† they

Oomraotee, a Thuggee Head-Centre of old time.

* Vide p. 90.

† Vide p. 189.

sent word of it to the Seth at Nagpore, and he, as
* *Vide p.* 189. has been shown,* obtained their transfer to their
custody upon his own security. The man Kyum
Sing now stipulated, on the part of the dacoits,
that they should not be proceeded against if they
made good the equivalent, and this was assented
to. The Seth's appointed searchers next went
with their prisoners, to the different dêras or ren-
dezvous of the dacoits, and got them to disgorge
different sums of money. They collected in all, in
this way, a sum of 16,000 rupees. The Jalnah
merchants, to whom a portion of the plundered
consignments belonged,† now came upon the scene.
† *Vide p.* 187. They claimed to share in the amount thus recovered,
and upon this the Seth, who had lost the most and
at whose expense this partial success had been
acquired, desired his men to come up at once to
Nagpore with the recovered treasure and the four
persons in their custody. There the latter were
persuaded that they should be set free *if they*
promised to make up the rest of the amount plun-
dered. In the meanwhile the Jalnah claimants
complained of these proceedings to the Nizam's
Durbar at Hydrabad, and the plaint was by it
forwarded to the Resident at that Court, Mr. Yule,
whose intervention our Ward had meanwhile also
claimed.‡ But the four dacoits had in the interim
been set at liberty. Our demand for their custody
could not however be evaded, and the result was
that they were produced by the Seth and made
over, as before noticed, to my assistant at Nagpore,
Captain Shakespeare (*vide p.* 189.) Subsequently

they were by him, on the requisition of Mr. Yule, transferred to the Nizam's authorities at Jalnah for prosecution, the venue lying in the Nizam's jurisdiction. At Jalnah they were tried as has been seen, and sentenced to death ; and there Muljee, Hêma and Jowahirra rose upon their guard and, as before stated (p. 190,) effected their escape. It was not clear whether the Rohilla prisoner also got away. It was said that the guard was gained over and was not really overpowered, but that it was so declared as a pretence only. The plundered Sahoo now obtained a renewed opportunity for pressing the now escaped leader Muljee, for the promised further restoration of the pillaged treasure, and he again set his people to hunt him out. They traced him to the vicinity of the city of Hyderabad, where they again arrested him, and along with him the man *Hurree Sing* (one of the four men lately rescued from Ward's lock-up.) The Seth was now allowed by the local native authorities, to retain Muljee in his custody upon his own security "to assist him in searching out his lost property"!

When I claimed these two men, the Seth declared "he did not quite know where the man Muljee now was"; but the other, Hurree Sing, was eventually made over, first to our assistant at Hyderabad (Colonel Thornhill,) and by him was sent on to Ward at Jalnah. But in regard to Muljee, the fact was he was suffered to go, and to what end what followed will show. For Muljee, through information acquired by Jowahirra Durzee an accomplice in the robbery, from *Jeerun Sing*,

**Treasure
Convoy
plundered
near Mul-
kapore.** presently committed another heavy dacoitie one morning before dawn, upon two carts laden with treasure, at a spot where they had been pulled up for the night, near Mulkapore in Berar, the first of the two cases before alluded to (p. 192,) and in which he was joined by *Kishen Sing*, their joint gangs numbering twenty-two men. The consignment was "guarded" by two sepoys only, who ran away at once. The booty on this occasion, was 21,056 rupees only, one only of the two carts having been plundered. Thirteen of the dacoits were seized for this affair by the local police, including both the leaders, *Muljee* and *Kishen Sing*, and, as it happened, *the man Girdháree Sing* also (for he was not in the robbery), but who all were shortly released for want of evidence. *Girdháree Sing* the carrier, had pressed the leader *Muljee*, for some further restitution of the money plundered from his employer in the *Ootradapet* affair, so now, when a month subsequently the above acquired booty was dug up for distribution from where the dacoits had buried it (for he was cognizant of this fresh plunder,) he too repaired to the meeting. He and his nephew *Oojein Sing* (just seized along with himself at *Ajmere*,*) there-upon received a sum of 10,000 rupees on that account. *Jeewun Sing* also obtained 5000 rupees from them—for not only had he given them information of the consignment, but he was threatened by the plundered parties with disclosure of his complicity with dacoits, and he on his part there-upon threatened the robbers, and they had to

* Vide p.
181.

pacify him in this way. A further sum of 1100 rupees was also exacted from them by a well-known rogue named *Sirreerám*, on the threat of his informing against them to Captain Davies, at that time my sub-assistant for Berar. This fellow came to see me, when I was on tour, at Akôla later on with Captain Davies; but he was very close, and merely offered to "assist us," without divulging anything, and I afterwards saw him on several occasions at Jalnah, his home, where he used often to visit Ward, subsequently stationed there, to whom too he sometimes vouchsafed a little information, his own effort being to discover what *we ourselves* were about, for he was in league with the entire robber confederacy. What remained from the above plunder being thus insufficient for the purpose of adequately requiting the Sahoocar's demands for his losses in the Ootradapet affair, something else must be devised. His losses must be made up. He had been required, moreover, to produce Muljee. He must feign that an effort had been made to do so, and trust to being able to effect the man's escape in the affected effort. Muljee Jemadar was thereupon moved to commit another dacoitie on some treasure convoy, and this was accomplished at Sowndha, in Khandeish, ^{Dacoitie at Sowndha.} as already alluded to (pp. 184, 185, 192.) On this occasion the "gang" numbered fifty-one persons, mostly Meenas, all under the leadership of the man Muljee Ját, but of whom some were not actually present in the robbery itself. Three of our approvers were, however, accomplices in it,

of whom one was Sadoolla Náee, the grand-looking fellow I have before mentioned (p. 186.) Their scouts at the railway station at Julgám, in Berar, had sent word of the arrival there by rail from Bombay of a quantity of treasure, which was about to be sent off on camels to *Hoosingabad*. The gang upon this moved from their several dêras, and awaited the convoy at the Taptee river. It was under a guard of Army Sepoys. The gang was a joint one, consisting of a lot of Meenas just come down from Rajpootanah, under their distinct leader, one *Bhickjee*, and of the Rhatore quota, which under Muljee had committed the two previous robberies at Ootradapet and near Mulkapore. The assembled robbers thought to fall upon the convoy one night in that neighbourhood, but finding the guard too much on the alert, they broke off into small parties, to re-assemble at a concerted rendezvous farther on, appointing a couple of men to follow the convoy and bring back word of it from its next halting-place. These came in with the information that the treasure had been halted for the night at Sowndha, close to a police-station, and that the infantry escort had now left it and gone away. Elated at this, the dacoits mustered in a nullah or ravine hard by the spot, and at midnight sallied forth, and, first flinging stones where the camel-men of the convoy were, to disturb them, they rushed upon them in a body and set them to flight—nor did the men at the police-station show themselves. The treasure was now hurriedly carried off to the nullah, and

there two bags of it were entrusted to a couple of robbers, with orders to escape forthwith to *Julgam*, another tryst. The rest they buried at different spots in the river-bed farther on, and then dispersed into the neighbouring hills. The hue and cry had been taken up, the plundered camel-men accompanied by sepoy's of the Khandeish police, and by villagers, took up the track. Entering the hills, the policemen began firing into the jungle—the dacoits ran about here and there. Lutchmun Ját, a brother of the leader Muljee, and two others, one of whom had received a musket-shot on a hand, were arrested. They pointed out where eight of the bags of the treasure had been concealed, and these were thereupon dug up. *Oliver Probyn's* excellent Bheel policemen threw out a cordon of posts round the foot of the barren hills into which the dacoits had escaped. They were thus in a manner starved out—some contrived to break away, but as many as twenty men in all, were eventually taken into custody, two or three at a time as they appeared in quest of food. The treasure plundered, was to the extent of 130,000 rupees, carried upon eight camels; the amount recovered was reckoned at 64,000 rupees, more or less. Thus a good margin of booty was still acquired on this occasion, from which eventually to pay off the yet unsettled portion of the “compromise” in the matter of the previous robbery at Ootradapet. But, among those arrested for the present robbery, were not only the brother of the leader of the gang, *but the latter himself*, Muljee,

under the alias of *Khoomjee*, as well as the man *Sadoolla Náee* and some others, all more or less also concerned in the two previous robberies at Ootradapet and near Mulkapore. After the local police action in the case, and in which five of the number arrested, including Lutchmun the leader's brother, were sentenced to seven years' transportation, another to a short imprisonment for "trying to escape," and three released, of whom one had been admitted as Queen's Evidence, the remaining eleven persons were, upon my requisition, forwarded to Erinpoorah for transfer to Blair, our assistant for Rajpootanah, to be confronted with approvers. Among them were Muljee, the leader of the gang, and the man Sadoolla Náee, as already shown,* but of which we were not then aware, as they were under disguised names. I had at just about this time, claimed, through Mr. Yule at Hyderabad, the two men Muljee Ját and Hurree Sing, from the custody of the Seth, informally suffered to take them over upon his own security in the Ootradapet case.† The Seth had replied to the demand, that he "believed" the former of these two men to be at *Dhoolia* or its vicinity. Of course he was there, for *Dhoolia* was the head Mofussil station for the *Khandeish* district, to where the prisoners in the recent dacoitie at Sowndah, had, as the Seth well knew, been taken for trial, and he had himself, moreover, interveningly released him.‡ He had done so prior to the insufficient dacoity near *Mulkapore* which was shortly after committed and was

* *Vide p.*
185.

† *Vide p.*
195.

‡ *Vide p.*
195.

followed by this one at Sowndha. He had released him together with Hêma, Jowahirra Durzee, and Hurree Sing, who had also, somehow previously fallen under his "charge"—all of whom had, be it remembered, except Hurree Sing, broken away from the native jail at Jalnah, while lying under sentence of decapitation (*vide* pp. 190, 195.) He had released Muljee and these others, *upon their own security, and on their written bond to restore to him the full stipulated amount in the matter of the pillage at Ootradapet,*¹ for they knew he had sufficient evidence against them to ensure their execution, and he was able, as has been seen, to have them seized at any time, such being his influence down there. Thus called upon now by the Nizam's Durbar, at my instance, *to produce Muljee*, he sent off an unintelligible telegram to the magistrate at Dhoolia, and being required in reply to be "more explicit," he wrote he wanted "Khoomjee, *alias* Mália Ját," to be safely sent to Hyderabad, "to point out the robbers who had plundered him in the Ootradapet affair," and he supplied the magistrates at the same time, with a personal description of him; and had sent, he added, a man whom he called "Poorjee" (believed to be *Girdháree Sing*,) to identify him. But the said Muljee, *alias* Khoomjee, was among the eleven

¹ "He has debited them in his accounts, as if they owed him the money in ordinary course, with *double* the amount he was robbed of, and has told them that unless they produced that much, he would not let them off. If any of them get arrested, the Seth petitions the Sircar and gets them released." (Evidence of Sadoolla Náze, Enclosure V. of Report No. 224, dated 13th March 1865.)

* Vide p
200.

prisoners already forwarded on my requisition to Erinpoora.* The magistrate upon this requested me to have the man returned to his custody, and I, unknowingly, directed Blair, then with the late Colonel Elliot's camp at Erinpoora, to comply. In the meantime the Seth had himself gone to Erinpoora, on his way to his home at Bikaner for the marriage there of his son. His secret purpose was, as we afterwards became aware, to visit the Colonel and thereby expedite the required transfer ; for he was well acquainted with Colonel Elliot, and used frequently to visit him when he was Commissioner at Nagpore, and he now waited upon him accordingly. The prisoner Muljee Ját, now calling himself " Khoomjee " (as the Seth seemed well to know,) was thereupon handed over to the Wukeel for Márwar in attendance on Colonel Elliot, now become Agent Governor-General for Rajpootanah, and was by that wukeel, as he reported, " sent on to Ajmeer." *He escaped*, we were told, soon after he had been forwarded from there, *but how or from where*, we were not informed ! Within a reasonable time for intelligence of this to reach Dhoolia, the man " Poorjee," who had been sent there to identify him, *also disappeared* ! This circumstance was at least suspicious, and all these matters show the complete compromise that was entered into between those several Natives. Asked by me " how, on the requisition of a private individual, he should have requested me to return the man to his custody," the magistrate replied that " he had at the time no hope of any evidence being

available against him, and believed he would be soon released, and that on receiving the telegram and letter from that individual" (that is, from the said Seth,) "which seemed to afford a prospect of his conviction, he had sent for the man to confront him with the person deputed to identify him!"²

The frequency in the districts indicated, of the above and similar instances of dacoitie, may be truly assigned to the cotton mania, which had fastened upon speculators during the prevalence of the War in America, from where a supply of that material was in consequence no longer procurable. This cotton hunger necessitated the despatch of heavy remittances of treasure for the purchase of the commodity in the productive cotton fields of the Deccan. Such rich consignments, consisting, when in silver, of *reals*, and "khoores" or silver brick, or of "hurrs" or nuggets (ingots) when in gold, rather than always of hard current cash, crossed and re-crossed the country between Bombay and the principal inland commercial towns of the Deccan, as well as the regions higher up. Wealth in solid substance streamed through

² P.S.—Note, April 1888: All these matters were, at a subsequent period, embodied in a general report from myself to the Government of India in the Foreign Department. It contained a full account of these Meena-Rhatore dacoits, with the long lists of their excesses throughout the land, and it would show that I was more than confirmed by our subsequent operations and researches, in all that I had above noted of them. The Report was printed and widely circulated as a Blue Book. (Vide para. 68 and enclosures, No. 1160A, dated 30th November 1869.)

the country, and the chances begotten thereof, were what the robbers speculated upon—with what success has been seen, the remittances being generally only very slenderly guarded. Opium convoys are a further temptation, and serve similarly to incite their enterprise; for not only is the drug plundered while under conveyance to Bombay from Malwa, where chiefly it is grown (when the booty is always a valuable one, even when disposed of at half its market value,) but the bullion and specie despatched for its purchase, are also carried off; or immunity from plunder, whether of opium or of treasure, is only secured from one gang, by the previous payment of *black-mail* to another.

To go on with and sum up the events of the day, I have additionally here learnt to-day, that the man Muljee or Mulla Ját, so frequently above mentioned, lately died at Boorhampoor. So thus I have information of *Girdháree Sing* and his nephew *Oojein Sing*, being arrested at Ajmere while attempting to defraud the opium Customs; of *Kishen Sing* and his brother, *Hurree Sing*, being traced to Ajmere, of whom Kishen Sing had been taken into custody through his unguarded quarrel with the arch-traitor *Choutmull*; of the undoubted death at Boorhampoor of *Muljee Ját*, who had so much robbed Peter to pay Paul; and of the recent occurrence, by a gang from this very Bikaner, of a heavy treasure dacoitie near far-off Bungalore; of the plunder of a *sunga* or convoy of opium not far out of Indore—as well as a

rumour of another savage robbery somewhere near *Sidhpore*, on the high road from Ahmedabad. I address Blair, Berkeley, Taylor, Davidson, Younghusband, and Mr. Saunders, on all these matters, and feel satisfied with the research.

In the afternoon we together visited one of the principal Mahájuns of the place, named Rám Rutten, at his fine dwelling—floors of white marble, walls of polished white stucco. He displayed to our gaze, heaped together in several flat basket-trays, all his own and his wife's jewellery—pearls, rubies, emeralds, sapphires, and other uncut precious stones, formed into ornaments of barbaric magnificence certainly, but in uncouth style and promiscuous, the one prevailing idea seeming to be, to mass all together, anyhow, without reference to sortance, so long as each should comprise *something that was highly valuable and costly!* His youthful wife showed herself also, as not the least priceless gem of the house we may suppose, from her beauty; but did so stealthily from behind an open-work lattice balcony, from where, with lustrous eyes, she watched the interview in the room below. The Mahájun was a very intelligent person, and seemed, too, to know a good deal about the doings of dacoits, for he not only mentioned the robbery near distant Mysore, which I had already just learnt of, but another, that but now referred to, of recent occurrence near *Sidhpore*, in Guzerat, in which he said much treasure had been carried off, and several persons were killed and wounded. He afterwards

Bikanoor.

sent us several trays of sugar-candy and sweet-meats.

The Maharajah's Visit.

At nightfall the Maharajah paid me his return visit. He did so in state, and Coleridge improvised his only large room for the occasion. This he contrived by borrowing from the palace the Rajah's own State Chair and a couple of silver chairs for ourselves, also a pair of very handsome candelabras of an ancient Oriental pattern, wrought in solid silver, these being ceremoniously placed upon outspread carpets, fronting either side of the great chair. A salute of seventeen guns from the fort, announced the Maharajah's departure from the palace, on the first sound of which we sallied forth on horseback, accompanied by the Dewán and other leading courtiers, and lighted on the way by flambeaux held on tridents. We reached the fort just as the Maharajah had emerged through its gateway, seated grandly in a state "peenus" or Sedan chair, borne by men in scarlet livery, (*vide* footnote, page 3.) This fine conveyance was emblazoned with designs in gold, and set round with deep gold fringes, a rich silk canopy covering it, reared at the corners upon shafts of gold. After the customary salutations called Istikbál, or greetings on meeting, I rode rapidly back to receive the Maharajah on his arrival at our house, on his presently reaching which, two other salutes were fired, one for himself and one for me. This was done from two twelve-pounder guns of burnished brass, brought down to our place for the purpose, his

Some Records of Crime.

own golundáz, or artillerymen, working them. They regulated the salutes admirably. I then ceremoniously conducted our Visitor up the steps. He accomplished this with some difficulty from his lameness, leaning heavily on my arm to conceal the infirmity. Our conversation at this interview was varied—of the natural products of the country once more, and how properly to develop them; of steamships, railways, the late Durbar held at Agra, *and of the advance of the Russians*, about which the Maharajah was particularly curious. After a while, I, in my turn, gave His Highness his rookhsut with the same ceremony as observed towards myself in my visit. This simply was to slightly touch his breast and arms with some uttur, served from his own gold cruse, accompanied by a few words of friendliness and goodwill, and to dismiss his three or four attendant Courtiers in the like manner. I then conducted the Maharajah back to his “peenús” (or *sella gestatoria*;) on his being lifted away in which, followed by his numerous train, he was again saluted from the brass cannon—the flare from the uplifted flambeaux lighting up the scene, and displaying the quaint but orderly pageant. There was no hubbub, no shouts or exclamations, nor any confusion such as are the ordinary accompaniments of a Rajah’s procession; no crowding or hustling, but everyone in his proper place, and everyone in Court dress. I observed that a large loaded pistol was laid by his side after he had seated himself in his tukht-i-rowán, or royal

travelling litter. His own attire was the usual Rajpootanah long robe, the skirts thereof in the amplest folds or pleatings; a finely hilted dagger in his waist-band, a handsomely sheathed sword held in his right hand, some diamond rings on his fingers, rich gold bracelets on his wrists, and a deep necklace of large pearls with a fine large single emerald drop suspended at its centre, his tall head-gear being decorated with the diamond aigrette in the shape of the figure 6, peculiar to Rajpoot princes; and a superb diamond frontlet of a single stone, pendent over his forehead from the front part of his headdress. On the removal of the extemporized paraphernalia, we were glad to have our table replaced in the room and to have our dinner, the hour being late enough. But additional dishes were supplied by the king's cooks in honour of the occasion—and the usual, but, alas! not drinkable wines—but some excellent champagne from Coleridge's stock rectified that deficiency. The Maharajah on this occasion, gave me some copper coins of a by-gone age, found, he said, in the ruins of a palace called Rung-Mehal, or "painted palace," near Bhutnêre, a fortress on his northern frontier, a place of great antiquity, taken from the Bhuttees by storm by the Rajah's predecessor in 1807, and retained as an appanage. Bhutnere is the capital of the Bhuttee tribe, and is said to have been stormed and dismantled by Tamerlane (or *Timour Lung*, the lame Timour.) According to a local tradition, Secundur Roomi, the name throughout India of Alexander the

Great, halted at Bhutnêre on his march to the mouths of the Indus after the conquest of the Punjab, and the Sutlege used in those days to flow by there, as indicated indeed by its departed but still traceable channel in this direction, but it was more probably in the time of the Seleucidæ, that the region was frequented by the Grecians, or Yonânees as they are spoken of to this day in India, traces of whom may be regarded to exist in some of the implements in daily use throughout Bikaner territory, notably the Grecian ram's head in the hilts and handles of weapons.

1st February, Bikaner.—I walked early this morning to a village five miles distant, called Redmilsir, where the lime-kilns are situated which supply the choonam or mortar used in the city. The country round about yields an abundant quantity of excellent kunkur, or limestone, the low range upon which the city stands being indeed of that formation, and the metal obtainable very little below its surface, but which at this village is of a superior sort. For this reason the site was selected for the obsequies of deceased Maharajahs and of the members of their family, from the facility of here obtaining mortar for the erection of those picturesque *chetries*, or cinereal monuments, which abound in Rajpootanah and Central India. And here, alas! the awful ordeals were enacted of burning with the dead, the living bodies of the unhappy widows of the deceased, and of other unfortunate women of his stunned and bewildered household. These barbarous rites were performed

The Cenotaphs at
Devi-
Koondh.

Suttee.

at a spot hard by the village called Dévi-Koondh, or Sacred Pool,³ where there was a spacious tank (now dry,) of stone masonry, and close to it long lines of chetries environing it or standing round about, each beautiful structure made of purest white marble procured from the quarries of Mukrána, or of freestone, or of polished white choonam obtained at the spot. These edifices were of remarkable elegance—plinth, post, and cupola, within and without, combining in a manner to present to view, the purity⁴ from which they might be said to have sprung; but they were creative of mournful reflections, for how could the mind divest itself of that one absorbing idea, the thought of what those cenotaphs represented, what they were meant to commemorate! Each row of these architectural gems was enclosed in an oblong paved courtyard, entered, through surrounding walls, by dwarf doors or wickets, kept carefully closed, an establishment of Brahmins being maintained for the charge of them, who every morning throw water upon certain raised slabs placed within them, and daub them with ochre and red powder. These memorial slabs are laid in the centre of the platforms over which the little pavilions are erected, and upon them are in-

³ Koondh signifies any pool, spring or basin, hole or well consecrated to some holy purpose.

⁴ This is no mere conceit if considered with the correct signification of the expression Sath, which comprehensively means, every feminine virtue; and Sathi (incorrectly written Suttee,) signifies the possessor thereof—the truly pure and virtuous wife and woman.

scribed the names of those whose cremation they certify ; and they indicate the exact spot where the pyre stood. The deceased is also represented on the slab, riding on horseback, horse and man finely ornamented ; and in front of and behind this principal form, or in rows under it, are also engraved the figures, each with arms crossed over the bosom, of the poor creatures who became the dead man's Suttees on the occasion, and immolated themselves by burning in the same fire which consumed his corpse. How really they should have been induced to do so of their own free wills, as is the common vaunt, passes comprehension ! It is understandable that a sense of religious obligation in a righteous cause, or heroism kindled of an in-born sentiment of devotion, of which there have been grand examples, will lead men and women to submit to death with every horror, and that the mind can be accustomed from earliest infancy to contemplate the necessity, sooner or later, for an imposed act of self-immolation ; but when the time comes, when that dire foredoom suddenly and unexpectedly befalls, and the gruesome fact which evoked it, is present and appals, where is the fortitude, except sometimes in the aged, or in some rare instance of all-conquering affection and admiration, or occasionally in some exceptional stoic or philosopher—how much less in weak woman—that can be commanded to meet it, except the mind be so enthralled and deluded as to be bereft of sense, or the sufferer be phrenzied and rendered insensible to pain ? It is this indeed

Suttee.

which is the fact—the victim was generally stimulated with drugs ; she is dazed by the glamour of the preparations ; she is crazed by the adulations of the household Brahmins, who persuade her of the glories of becoming “SUTTEE ;” she feels glorified by the adorations of the multitude ; she is overcome by opiates ; she mechanically ascends the funeral pile ; and there, as she places the dead man’s head upon her lap, she, for the first time in her now finished lifetime, utters her deceased husband’s name, and exclaims, perhaps loudly screams, “SATH—SATH !”—expressions of sacred import. The apotheosis completed, her part nobly fulfilled, the torch is applied to the wood-pile, reeking with oil, and stuffed with inflammable substances ; ’mid the din, the cries of the surrounding crowd, the noise and beating of drums and other instruments, the lamentations of the women, the flames rapidly ascend ; the next moment, and only for a moment, the form of the victim is beheld, bald and uncovered, her tresses and gossamer apparel singed off, but still momentarily seated, or fallen inanimate over the corpse of her dead lord, both enveloped in thickest smoke, and, presently, sinking with the crash of the burning timber into the midst of the fiery furnace—not a sound of dying agonies now—life relinquished—heaven gained ! Nowhere found to be enjoined in their sacred writings, except in those interpolated at the period of its direly cruel conception,⁵ who then could have invented the

⁵ P.S.—I find it stated in an old number of the “Asiatic

abominable practice; and why its invention—to what cause attribute the terrible innovation? I arrive at the reason impulsively. The origin of the cruel rite, and its introduction into the religious canon, may reasonably be assigned to zenána intrigue. Successions have to be hastened, affiances dissolved, alliances gained, possession of the women (“wives and concubines”) transferred, wealth acquired, power grasped: to poison and dispossess were easy—it had become a habit to poison rulers; monarchs trembled on their thrones, husbands in their households. They devised how to prevent it, whereby to make the preservation of their lives a solicitude in their women; here is the antidote—if a man dies, his wife shall die also! Deification must, however, be promised, re-union in heaven assured, the wife’s latest act shall hallow her husband, her latest breath be an invocation, the twain parted by death shall be re-embodied and re-united under a celestial marriage canopy in heaven; this will be a powerful incentive, a suasion and a sop; she shall be proclaimed “Sathi,” with clamorous ceremonies and a pageant,—an *auto-da-fé*,—and likewise every female of the same household, slave-girls and concubines, all shall be Sathi—a clean sweep of the entire adult zenána! Suttée followed—it

Journal ” that many eminent pundits and scholars, deeply versed in Hindoo literature, had proved in a manner equally clear and conclusive, that these barbarous murders were directly contrary to Hindoo law. This before the practice was finally prohibited. The act itself of a woman burning with the corpse of her deceased husband or master, was in Sanskrit called *Sahagamamum*.

became an institution. Men no longer feared treachery at home, whatever the cabals abroad; and thus poor weak woman became inexorably doomed to suffer—thus miserably to perish !⁶

The Court
of Directors
of the
East
India
Company.

This was in the past. All honour to the Directors of the good old East India Company for putting a stop to this and other enormities—Thuggee, Meriah Sacrifices,⁷ Female Infanticide, Trága.⁸ I would apostrophize that most excellent body—worthy of fondest recollections for many noble acts; it sealed

⁶ P.S.—1891. I am pleased at finding myself confirmed, to some degree, in this view of the hideous custom by the following writings in an old number of the “*Asiatic Journal*” as to the origin of it:—“Polygamy being the cause of much discontent among the women, either from the little satisfaction they have from men who divide their affection among so many, or from jealousy, which inevitably springs up among many rivals, it was found that women got rid of their husbands, and that in one year four times as many men died as women; so that to oblige the latter to contribute to the preservation of the former, it was ordained that women who wished to pass for virtuous characters should accompany their husbands on their death.”—“*Eastern Travels of a Native of Holstein.*”

Again: Cæsar Frederick, an old Venetian traveller, furnishes a similar reason for this “beastly quality,” as he expresses it, existing among the people: “I was desirous to know the cause why thus women so wilfully burne themselves against nature and laws, and it was tolde mee that this law was of ancient time, to make provision against the slaughters which women made of their husbands. For in these days, before this law was made, the women for every little displeasure that their husbands had done unto them, would presently poison their husbands, and take other men; and now by reason of this law they are more faithful unto their husbands, and count their lives as deare as their owne, because that after his death her own followeth presently.” (*Vide Extra Appx.*)

⁷ Human sacrifices, to propitiate the Earth-god, for the suppression of which abomination a special department was established.

⁸ Trág or Trága was a licensed custom to sit unremittingly at your door in all weathers, importuning for a claim, real or pretended, until complied with. Those thus “sat upon” generally giving in to the exaction in order to be rid of the nuisance and the scandal of it—for no one interfered with the impostors.

and completed our allegiance, and “*extinctus amabitur idem.*” (*Vide Extra Appendix.*)

A Rajpoot servant of the Maharajah happened to be at the spot where I thus inwardly communed. He was exercising a horse in harness. He had witnessed Suttee, and to my question as to the necessity that compelled the barbarous custom, he involuntarily replied that he believed the poor creatures were made to die for no just reason at all (*hūk nāhūk se—fas aut nefas.*) On my asking to be admitted into one of the courtyards, I was required by the attendant Brahmin to take off my shoes first. I readily assented, cold although the flagstones under foot, and heated though I was by my brisk walk so far. I went round nearly every one of the several chetries, but was not permitted to ascend into them. Some were very chaste and beautiful; but the vision constantly presented itself to my troubled mind, as I stood by each and contemplated the engravings upon the slabs, of awe-struck, terrified, helpless woman—stirred by a tumultuous and applauding concourse, and urged by a relentless priesthood; persuaded by them with the hope of immortality and of immediate re-union above with him in whose obsequies she takes so great a part—consenting to submit to the cruellest of deaths; here, here at this very spot, amid the shouts and cries, the lamentations of those close round about her, with no hope, not the shadow of a chance of escape from the torment, perhaps shrieking at the fell prospect, or as often—noble fortitude!—in stern and silent resolve to accomplish this last performance, to consummate

this last act inexorably required by a cruel religion, unshrinkingly, with resignation, faithful to the last! May not such devotion, such a sacrifice, find acceptance Above?

Suttee.

One of these sacred buildings marked the spot where the remains of Maharajah Anoop Sing were consumed; the slab recorded that *eighteen* women performed Suttee with his corpse, two only of whom were his wives proper. The chetrie of his father and predecessor, Kurrum Sing, showed that *nineteen* miserable victims were similarly there sacrificed, of whom only one was a kháwás, or slave-girl, eight being his wives, and the rest their "companions." That of his father, Rae Sing, displayed the figures of *six* wives burnt with his corpse; with Maharajah Soor Sing *four* wives were immolated. With Maharajah Soojun Sing, whose superb monument, *quasi* chetrie, of red sandstone, was reared upon as many as twenty-four fine pillars of marble (eight to sixteen being the number usually supporting the other edifices,) ten women achieved Suttee, eight of them being his married wives. But the chetrie of Maharajah Joráwur Sing recorded the terrible story that *twenty-two* women submitted to be burnt with that famed ruler's remains, of whom two only were his wives or princesses, nineteen were their suhêlees or "companions," and the remaining one the poor Brahminee water-carrier of the entire zenána!*

* P.S.—Tod, in the account of his visit to the cenotaphs at Munderore, the ancient capital of Marwar, relates that one of the number showed that "no less than sixty-four females accompanied the shade of Maharajah Ajeet Sing (contemporary of Feroksher of Delhi) to the Mansion of the Sun; but this was twenty short of

Horried—appalled—I felt constrained to take up Melpomene's lament—I am sure I did so in my sickened mind—and to exclaim with her and the conjured-up multitude of breast-beating weepers and mourners, "Hoi, hoi!" Woe, woe!

At the principal gateway leading into the Palace Fort at Bikaner—the centre one of three gateways, one within another, and called the "Elephant Gate"—may be seen, as before noticed (p. 154,) rows of uplifted hand-marks cut out in the stone facings on either side. They denote the Suttées who have passed out of the palace with the biers of deceased Maharajahs; for each luckless woman was required, by way of sealing her "determination" to immolate herself, to place the palm of her right hand upon some yellow daub presented to her in a platter as she passed out, and to press it against the wall of the gateway, the hand-mark thus left being subsequently cut out in the wall, or, as in some instances, a hand was fashioned in marble from the model afforded by the impression, and fixed upon it. A great many of the marks were

the number who became Suttées when Boodh Sing, Rajah of Boondi (an intrepid general of Aurungzebe, and a contemporary of Ajeet Sing,) 'was accidentally drowned.' Arguing upon the circumstance of the number of Suttées on each occasion being sculptured upon the slabs in the centre of each cenotaph, he attributes the dread requirement to "vanity as the principal incentive to these tremendous sacrifices." I cling, however, to my own idea as to the cause—the then ever-present fear of domestic treachery.*

* P.S.—January, 1892: A further confirmation of the opinion above independently expressed by me in the text, will be found in an *Extra Appendix* added, while these pages were in the press, from the early numbers of the "*Asiatic Journal*" obligingly lent to me from the Library of the India Office, a perusal of which may interest some readers.

undistinguishable, not only from age, but from the walls being covered from time to time with a thick whitewash; and some, too, were very low down on the wall, as though the obedient, heart-broken things had groveled to be able to reach their hands there at all. Thirty-seven hand-marks were, however, quite distinct. The Maharajah has ordered to have me provided with a detailed list of every Suttee performed on the deaths of his predecessors, whether at Bikaner or at Bhutnère the former capital of the principality. The chetrie of Bika Sing, the founder of it, and of his son and immediate successor, are close outside of the city walls westward. The Elephant Gate alluded to is so called from having an elephant of plastered brick standing on either side of it, as large as life, and a mahout seated on the neck of each, dressed in the national costume of the period. They look very imposing as one passes into the gateway by them.

A Case of
Suttee.

And here let me give an account of an act of Suttee as witnessed by Coleridge. It was one of those exceptional instances of assent and noble endurance which I have cursorily referred to, and it took place a few years ago, before the revolting practice had been effectually and finally suppressed. The man who had died was a Thakoor of good repute, although of the poorer order of the Barons of the State. His widow declared she would be burnt along with his corpse. The village where the cremation was to take place, was situated a few miles from Bikaner; and by the time Cole-

ridge and his father had ridden out to it, a vast concourse of people had already assembled there. The pile of faggots had been reared, and a small low hut of straw constructed on the top of it, in which the intended Suttee was to sit along with the dead body of her husband. Both gentlemen tried to dissuade her from the act, but they had come up too late to be successful. She was resolved, and had been so, it was said and believed, from the moment of her husband's latest breath, and she had, moreover, as he expired, uttered SATH-SATH, to seal that determination. The Brahmin priests, too, had used their opportunity with effect, and had too deeply impressed upon her mind the "sin" of any wavering thereafter. She had passed, it might be said, the hour of her greatest need. Simply attired in clothes of the finest texture, her hair streaming over her shoulders, and anointed with oil and a resinous stuff intermixed, she slowly, but resolutely, ascended the pyre, and stooping low to enter the hut, calmly sat down on a raised platform within it and tenderly placed her husband's head upon her lap; then crossing her left hand to the elbow of her uplifted right forearm, upon which she rested her face, she most beautifully awaited the fatal touch of the lighted brand, her female relatives and the officiating Brahmins congregated round the trench within which the firewood had been piled, meanwhile chanting in assuring strains, and the people shouting the same mystic words she herself had uttered when proclaiming her intention of submitting to the ordeal.

Straw, cotton, and cotton cloths, saturated in inflammable fluid, had been interlaid with the firewood, more particularly in and about the open hut raised at the top of it. After a brief pause a lighted torch was applied to three or four places simultaneously—the flames rushed up together, igniting and setting in a blaze every combustible element—in a moment they ascended through every interstice, and licked off the light garments of the victim—and instantaneously, but for a momentary space only, was to be seen, through the oily fumes and the flaming fire, that poor devoted woman, her body seamed with yawning cracks created by the sudden heat, her bare head like a scorched and blackened block, her hair having been blown off it with the first puff of the fire—but herself in the same solemn attitude—firm to the last—not a shriek uttered—not a movement perceptible—and her face erect! Presently the stack collapsed—the superstructure fell through—both its dead, and but now alive occupants disappeared in the fiery vortex, and left were consumed in the all-devouring element. From the heap of ashes the cinerated bones were by-and-by searched out, and, devoutly deposited in saffron-coloured bags, were entrusted to a couple of faithful Brahmins, and were by them in due course conveyed to the distant Ganges, and eventually consigned to that sacred stream.¹ She was a

¹ P.S.—How opposite this practice of invoking a blessing by the performance of the above described pious act, to that of Scottish Highlanders who, when *cursing* their enemies, profoundly express a wish “that their ashes may be scattered upon the waters!”

childless woman, the man's only wife, and about thirty-five years of age—fair, and “serenely beautiful.”*

We went, later in the day, to a private inter-
view with the Maharajah at the palace, to whom
I repeated my hope as to the prompter payment of
his criminal investigation establishment, and the
instant report of the occurrence of crime, by his
insisting on which his officials would, I urged,
perceive his own interest in the good cause. I

Private
Inter-
view.

* P.S.—A similar scene is described in “The Rambles and Recollections of an Indian Official,” as witnessed by the late Sir William Sleeman, my predecessor in the great cause in prosecution of which I have always felt honoured in having been one of his assistants, and eventually his successor as General Superintendent ; but in further confirmation of my reflections on this subject of *Suttee* (*vide* p. 213,) it is to the purpose to here avail myself of the following notice lately perceived by me in a volume of old date (1811) of the “*Asiatic Journal*”:—“The Pythagoreans (Hindoos) in former times have been a vile and treacherous kind of people, and had a law that when a husband died the wife should also be burnt, which is holden to this day, though not in so strict a manner, for now she may refuse it, but then her head is shaved, and she clad in a black vesture, a garment which among them is reputed most vile and hateful, that the basest slave in the country will not succour nor relieve her though she should starve.

“Now the cause why this law was first made was for that the women there were so fickle and inconstant, that upon any slight occasion of dislike or spleen they would poison their husbands, whereas now the establishing and executing of this law is the cause that moveth the wife to love and cherish her husband, and wisheth not to survive him.” (From the “*Travels of Robert Coverte*.”)

The widow of a Hindoo or Brahmin is still held as the most abject and degraded among the survivors of his family, and is put upon menial offices,—but no doubt she is sustained withal, if the following may be aptly applicable, or have been intended to apply, to the condition of these very unhappy ones:—“God setteth the solitary in families ; He bringeth out those that are bound with chains ” (Ps. lxxviii. 6. Old Testament version.)

had been requested to ascertain whether an individual named Kishoree Láll, who had been dismissed from attendance as wukeel on the Agent Governor-General, exercised any influence at Bikaner. I had to beat about in coming to the subject, and in a general way spoke to him of the habit on the part of hangers-on at Native courts, to let it be supposed that they possessed great influence with British officers, and which Native rulers were too ready to believe. The Maharajah spoke with great warmth on this subject, and I gathered from it that the man was held in some respect, but more from the circumstance of his son being a wukeel in attendance on our Resident at Jeypore, through whom it was supposed he was able to acquire influence at Calcutta, the seat of the British Government, than from his own recent important position at the Rajpootanah British Agency. He seemed to be desirous to be rid of the man, and intimated his intention to dismiss him. He appeared, however, to be in fear of giving umbrage to those about him by any very arbitrary act on his part, as that thus they would not fail to get up complaints against him. On this point he was very sensitive, although admitting that he was aware that such persons reaped a rich harvest from the countenance extended by or through them to professional robbers resident in his territory, but that he was now resolved "to curb them at all hazards," as he felt assured he might reckon on the support of the British Government; adding, in a tone of remorseful disquiet, that it was to the

lukewarmness into which he had suffered himself to drift, and because he had refrained from restraining them, that he attributed his having hitherto been denied an heir !

The Maharajah holds a public Durbar every morning after worship in his private chapel. I witnessed him doing so this morning before our interview, from a side door of the spacious Durbar Hall. He stood the while in front of his chair of state and received the salutations of the several officers of his court in succession, altering, as he did so, the position or altitude of his right arm according to the rank of each presented person. If, as seldom, he raised his hand as high as his breast, it was in acknowledgment of equal rank, but he never raises it *higher* than his breast in order to mark his own superiority. Those of the privileged or "General Circle," were permitted to perform their reverence from the same floor or level as that upon which he himself stood ; but those of inferior rank did so from a lower terrace. As each man came to the front to make obeisance and to salaam, his rank and designation were proclaimed by certain heralds or bháts standing by the pillars of the hall ; and while the audience lasted a Chárun bard chanted the king's titles and those of his ancestors—with a volubility, however, and in a pitch of voice educed from the accustomed practice. This was the Maharajah's daily course, and everyone appeared in full costume. It was only by a slight movement of his right hand or arm generally, that each salutation

The Daily
Durbar.

A broken-
down
Risáldár.

was distinguished by him, for he stood silent and erect the whole time, his sheathed sword resting upright on the floor with his hand upon its hilt. This morning levee was also the great Akhbár's observance, and adopted by the Maharajah's predecessors—but not so unremittingly followed as had been his wont, the present Maharajah being a stickler on such points, and adhering closely to every requirement of court etiquette. The ceremony lasts but a short time, and everyone on dismissal breaks off to the respective duties of the day. Among those who attended this morning's Durbar was a lowly, timidly demeaned individual whom we had previously met in the city. He had salaamed to us in a gentlemanly and soldierly manner, but with so much sorrowfulness upon his countenance that I instinctively made inquiries regarding him. He had been a Native officer in one of our own irregular cavalry regiments, but had been allured to take service in the Maharajah's Rissálah, or horse corps, by the assignment to him of a village; but through the machinations, as he declared, of evil-wishers, and their dislike of his uprightness, he lost his village, then his pay, and finally his place, and was now hopeless of reinstatement or redress; for he had become old and broken down. With difficulty had he maintained his wife and children, and his humble, but clean attire when he attended the Durbar, and his face, showed how much he suffered, as well from misfortune as from his poverty. I spoke in behalf of this man to the Maharajah, who at once ther

upon assigned a small pension to him from one of the *tikánahs* of the State. These “*tikánahs*” are formed from a kind of assignment from the revenues of the different circles of administration into which the government is subdivided, and from them pensioners are maintained, and such other contingent expenses defrayed.

Behind the audience room in which my interview took place this morning, and screened from it with thick *purdahs* or *portières*, was the Maharajah's private place of worship or temple, a kind elevated tabernacle bodily lifted on to a marble pediment, ascended into by steps, and surrounded by a low marble trellis fitted in between its several carved pillars. His Highness invited me to view it, and perceiving from his whispers to Coleridge, that he would like me to take off my shoes before I stepped up into it, after a momentary hesitation, which I at once checked myself in, I forthwith conformed—for he did not press it, and indeed said “Never mind”—and the desire moreover was a reasonable one, the place being holy to himself. We all then ascended into the precinct, leaving our shoes at the foot of the stairs. The deep upper cornice of this *sanctum sanctorum* was set round with figures of his idols in their different *avatárs*, all gorgeously decorated. Thus there were Vishnóo, Ramchundur, Káni-yá, in their several transformations; also the *Deotús*, Mahádeo, Gunnéssha, Gunputti, &c. The ample room was scrupulously clean, and was paved with marble. The Maharajah's daily habit is to worship there

The Maharajah's
Private
Chapel.

every morning after his ablutions, then to hold the customary Durbar—breakfast at noon, dine at eleven o'clock at night, go to bed at about two o'clock in the morning, and not leave his private apartments till about 9 a.m.

The Maharajah next showed me over his palace apartments, the Underoon or Ráwula, i.e. ladies' quarters, of course excepted. They contained several specimens of old English bedroom furniture, displayed embellished walls and ceilings, and a gallery of the portraits of his ancestors, four only of whom were shown to wear whiskers or beards.

Having taken leave, I next went, accompanied only by Nármuljee, the Prime Minister, to visit an Ooswálee Mahájun, who lived in a superb mansion, the fine frontage of which was of elaborately carved stone. The minister after this conducted me, on an elephant, through the market and other streets of the populous city, which at that very busy hour of the day were crowded with people, and with camels just arrived from distant desert entrepôts, laden with goods and merchandise. Stopping at one of the dookáns, or open shop booths, he procured for me several small uncut turquoises of a perfect cerulean hue; and here a jeweller imparted to me the secret for testing the genuineness of that stone. It was simple enough, being only to hold any piece of cotton or silk cloth (say a pocket-handkerchief,) tightly over the gem, and apply a red-hot cinder to it, or a lighted cigar. If the cloth gets burnt or singed,

Testing
Tur-
quoises.

the stone is spurious and will crack, not otherwise. I tried the experiment. My handkerchief remained uninjured, although I applied a red-hot cinder to it, and blew upon it to excite ignition. The turquoise proved to be a good one.

A black Tartar hound, brought down by the Powindahs, of the sort called Tázee, was presented to me to-day by the Maharajah, in return for a little English bull terrier which I had given him. He had a terrace full of dogs of kinds, and several Persian cats, both black and white, and he wished me to accept some of them, but I declined; my own monster cat, purchased by me last year from a similar káfilah in Nagpoor, surpassing them all. The Maharajah's affection for dumb animals is remarkable.

Some further specimens of ancient copper coins, Ancient
Coins. stated to have been from time to time found in old inhabited sites in Bikaner territory, were supplied to me to-day, one small one among them showing on the obverse, *a wolf suckling two infants*, so that that legend can hardly be confined to the story of Romulus and Remus only! Some copper utensils were produced, corroded with verdigris, indeed almost decomposed by it. They had been discovered in a room excavated from the ruins of the ancient palace at Rung-Mehul before mentioned.* The several platters had got welded *v. p. 208. together from age, many hundred years being assigned to the date of them. Speaking to the Maharajah about his unworked copper mines, I instanced how the Rajah of Kishengurh, his fellow

ruler in Rajpootanah, now derived a profitable revenue from utilizing the carbuncle mines in his territory, the *nuggeenas* or stones produced from which, were so much prized by European ladies and at home ; and as he had a little maiden, the child of a handmaid in the retinue of his Ulwur wife, of whom he was very fond, I left with his half-brother for presentation to her, in a little khim-kháwb bag, a pair of carbuncle earrings, made for me by a Delhi jeweller, from some specimens of that precious stone purchased by me at Jeypore. I was to have seen the little lady to-day, but as she completely rules her father, she had replied to his message sending for her, that she *couldn't come*. Coleridge described her as a pert little minx, who tyrannized over the Maharajah in the most capricious way. He has also a small son by the same mother, but who cannot succeed him ; but not any offspring by his married princesses. One of the latter bore him two sons, but both died soon after birth, rumour says from poison administered through jealousy on the part of the other queens. His "Ulwur wife" is a sister of the present Mahárajah of Ulwur, a merry-faced, plump little lady, according to Coleridge, but that she finds herself quite supplanted by the attractions of her slave girl, who from giving birth to the above two living children, has been admitted by the Maharajah, not to any precedence, for that would be unconstitutional, but to almost an equality in point of consideration, with all the married ladies of his ráwula. But it is admitted of her that she

takes care not to be lifted up by this preference. It is a common practice among native rulers, and particularly on the part of the chieftains of Rajpootanah, to take to wife the handmaids their queens bring with them when they themselves enter their households on marriage, the latter submitting to it with whatever grace they can command, whatever their mortification. A story is told of one of these sovereigns, that he severely and permanently withdrew himself from one such queen, because she expressed displeasure at the arrangement. Two or three slave girls accompany every princess as a part of her establishment on her marriage, ostensibly as their *suhâlees* or handmaids ; their progeny are, however, excluded from succession. When the lord of the household dies, the mother and her unfortunate children are too often cared for by no one, except, as formerly, she choose to become Suttee.

2nd February.—I paid my final visit to the Maharajah to-day. He took me into an apartment in which was a collection of emblems of royalty and other memorials of his ancestry. His principality is an offshoot of the Jodhpore State, a powerful dominion, and his contention has long been, that it was an elder branch of that family that established itself here, his ancestor, named Bika Sing, who seceded from Jodhpore and created the Bikaner sovereignty, having been an elder son of the reigning monarch of Jodhpore of the period ; and the Maharajah protests that in the eventuality of failure of rightful succession, or of

Regalia.

deposition, or other lapse in continuity in the Jodhpore sovereignty, it should be the title of his family, by right of lineage, to be acclaimed to it, as that the waywardness of his ancestor in leaving his father's court and carving out a territory for himself, did not constitute an act of absolute abnegation of succession to his sire's estates, nor any renunciation thereof, however much it should have been so regarded by the offended parent at the time, or whatever the order of the devolution that was adopted and had followed his demise. It was in such a spirit that the Maharajah exhibited to me the regalia of his birthright and dignities, as brought away from Jodhpore by Bika Sing and handed down to his successors. He fondled and caressed each badge and banner as he successively handled each ; and particularly, when he held up, and reverently regarded as he did so, a sceptre-like device fixed on to a blackened ivory haft (a *scipio eburneus* ?) declared to be an emblem of sovereign rank by hereditary descent, he spoke of it with a fervour and animation as though it shadowed a future by its indication of the past. I had not thought to witness so much enthusiasm. Under the warmth it excited in him, he became quite eloquent in giving me a history of his family and its aspirations—and he breathed a very Rajpoot of Rajpoots, did this desert-cradled king.

The term "Rajpoot" is synonymous, I was here told, with "Ráhtore." It signifies born to royal inheritance, to inherit government or rulership—"poot" being a rescindment of "pootr," a son ; and

“*rāj*” meaning kingly rule or government. The transition then from *Rājputra* (descendant of kings, or king’s sons,) to *Rāhtrā* and *Rāhtore*, is perceptible. This abbreviation followed in course of time and became the common appellation of the tribe, and the claim to either title is always proudly emphasized—“Main *Rājput* hoon, *Sāhib*”—or, “Main hoon *Rāhtore*” (I am a *Rajput*, sir; or, I a *Rāhtore* am). The tribe is declared to have originally peopled *Canouj*, the mighty capital of *Ajoodya*³ or kingdom of *Oudh*, where they attained unto great power, and on the subversion of that ancient dynasty by the Mahomedan invasion, to have migrated to, or rather, they bodily fled from there, after sustaining many defeats and great slaughter, into *Rajpootanah*, where they had partisans; that country at that period being called *Soorya-ushtra*, or country of the Sun-born or “*Soorya-vānsi*,” in contradistinction to “*Chundra-bānsi*” or the Moon-born; and there they established themselves, and finally founded a principality in *Mārwar* then com- Rājput
Rāhtor

³ P.S.—Whether *Ajoodya*, or *Aioodya*, is synonymous with *Yāhudia* or *Yāhoodi*, as Jews and their country are commonly called in India (*Shāmi* or *Shāma*, men of *Shām* (*Damascus*) being another appellation, as *Yoonāni* (people from *Ionia*), is that of the Greeks who settled in *Bactria* and the *Punjab* in the time of the successors of *Alexander the Great*), matters not; but some have observed a resemblance, both in physiognomy and some prevailing customs, between *Rajputs* and the *Jews*, and have remarked on their “hooked noses and Jewish features,” notably *Mountstuart Elphinstone* in his “*Journey to Cabool*,” who of this very court of *Bikaner* wrote, that it was “different from anything I had seen, those present being fairer than other *Hindostanees*, and marked by their Jewish features and showy turbans.”

The
Attack
upon
Chorroo
and
Repulse.

monly designated Maroost-hulli.⁴ This claim to descent from the traditional Solar and Lunar races, is clung to with much proud conceit, the rulers of Meywar, Jeypore, Marwar and Bikaneer, pretending to the former lineage and birthright, and those of Jesulmere, Cutch and others in that direction, to have sprung from the Moon ! I believe, however, that the term Ráhtore preferentially applies to the Rajpoots of Márwár and their branches, e.g. those inhabiting Bikaneer, than to Rajpoots generally of other parts of Rajasthán. But call them Rajpoots or Ráhtores, or whatever their descent, they are regarded as a race of born warriors, and many and chivalrous have been their exploits. I would instance the following as recounted to me to-day, with much exultation, as a feat of arms within our own time. The neighbouring wild province of Shekawátie, an appanage of the Jeypore State, had always been, as it still is, in a condition of turbulence and misrule arising chiefly from the splitting up of its banded estates into numerous "holdings," occasioned by a custom of equal division among male heirs. Its conterminous position too, on the frontiers of three large

⁴ P.S.—Tod interprets this term Maroost-hulli as "the region of death," and Márwár certainly has some such signification in that connection ; for a tribe of robbers, said to have originally come from that region and still in the habit of roaming through it, have acquired the name of Murwuree from their habit of eating deceased animals, snakes, crows, and jackals (and from their feeding on jackals they are also called Shigál-khors.) "Marná" signifies to beat, to kill ; and "murra" means dead. Soorya-ushtra or Saurashtr, included, Tod says, Guzzerat and the peninsula extending to the sea-coasts of Cutch and Kattyawár.

States (Jeypore, Jodhpore and Bikaner,) was another cause. The region had become, as it continues to be, a very nest of international mounted plunderers, not only countenanced by the authorities of those adjoined territories, but, associated with the thakoors and zumeendars thereof, mostly by those allied to the Shekávut race, in acts of plunder and rapine in all the adjacent districts. This state of things dated, in a great measure, from the ejection of several land-holders for a rebellion a time back, whose descendants still chafed under that act of deprivation till robber and warrior became interchangeable terms. A band of these discontents concerted a raid into Bikaner territory. The foray was joined in by kindred spirits, not only local Shekávut feudatories, but by certain thakoors of Bikaner itself of like affinity—by the latter, more for the excitement of the enterprise and the example of the successes of the malcontents, than from any positive ill-will to the local ruler. An attack upon the fort and town of Choorroo in Bikaner territory, was thereupon planned and promptly carried out with success. The place was taken and sacked without opposition. This was not to be brooked. A body of four hundred men mounted on camels was speedily assembled by the Bikaner ruler, and forthwith despatched to the rescue. The surprise only made the marauders more determined to resist their interruptors. The king's men were equally resolved on dispossessing them. Attack followed attack in quickest succession. Tenacious of their prey, the spoilers held on.

As persistently their pursuers fell on. Hand to hand the two sides fought. Now two bandit chief captains were struck down; and now also fell the leader of the camel party. The conflict was still maintained with varying success, till at length the plunderers forsook their prize and fled. All this within forty-eight hours from the time the rescuing party had started :

"Four hundred trumpets sounded
 A peal of warlike glee,
 * * * * *
 Was none who would be foremost
 To lead such dire attack :
 But those behind cried 'Forward !'
 And those before cried 'Back !'
 And backward now and forward
 Wavers the deep array ;
 And on the tossing sea of steel
 To and fro the standards reel,
 And the victorious trumpet-peal
 Dies fitfully away."

Parting
 Assur-
 ances.

We were next conducted to another lofty room, overlooking a tessellated courtyard silently paced by sundry stalwart warders, each with buckler behind a shoulder and sheathed sword held reclining across the bend of his left arm, their blended beards and moustaches tricked backwards over their ears, and their loins deeply girded. The Maharajah here repeated to me his plans for effectually ridding his territory of the plundering classes—that he had been thinking it out all night, and had determined to send for me again, although already formally *rookhsutted*—but that to be able to do so with effect, he would have to discharge many of his Uhhulkáráns or state officials, whom he knew to

foster them. With their ill-gotten gains safely invested, or lodged with bankers or others at Bombay and Calcutta, where he could not touch them (a source of regret, no doubt,) and a prospect of acquiring more cut away from them, they would certainly, he thought, invent complaints against him, which he seemed afraid our Government would give too ready credence to, and perhaps be led by them, to assume the management of his principality—a fear, and possibly a wholesome one, that seems to be present to the minds of most native rulers:—but I assured him that if he earnestly set himself to redress his subjects, and to free them from oppression and robbery, he should have no alarm that such complaints could harm him in the opinion of the British Government, whose sole desire was to leave native rulers to the management of their own internal administrations, with as little interference as possible when loyally endeavouring their best, rather than to assume it. We now finally parted, and as we did so he took off the sword he was wearing at his waist, and buckled it on to mine, a compliment which he performed with much grace, and I suitably acknowledged. It was a curved Khorassán blade of fine water—the hilt a Ram's head of solid silver—a moulded black sheath set with deep silver bands and rings richly engraved, and the belt, his own ordinary everyday one of sambre skin, mounted with massive sliding knobs of silver, each with a recumbent tiger embossed upon it; the silver waist-buckle, similarly ornamented, being fastened by a

A Par
Gift.

peculiar backward action sometimes met with in ancient armour-fittings.

Impres-
sions
regarding
the Maha-
raja.

It struck me that the Maharajah was not impressed with any great belief in our policy of non-interference. He harped a good deal on the effects which complaints against his acts if at all high-handed, or crafty insinuations, might be productive of at Calcutta, with the examples before him of the assumption by us of the administration of native princes in several instances. They and those by whom they are surrounded, cannot understand that we should really be so very disinterested as we profess to be. Hence their fear of machinations if they inclined to our suggestions, a feeling which *in the matter of the suppression of crime*, makes our own departmental endeavours in a measure inoperative. To act, therefore, too exclusively in the spirit of our present policy of *non-interference*, will not be fruitful of much good in that regard, our motives and unselfish energy for the public good being thus misunderstood, or rather *not understood*. To carry our ends effectually, compulsion in some form must occasionally be used—a certain amount of judicious interference. This must more or less be exercised, though of course with the utmost care and tact. Without it the Durbars will let things drift, and will meet our requisitions and inquiries with subterfuge and dissimulation, and with recriminations—always their resource from being so readily matured—a course they prefer to any decided action on their own parts in insisting upon their subordinates promptly

to comply with our requests, and to exert themselves. If, however, faith may be placed on his personal assurances, his Highness of Bikaner is loyally desirous to meet our views.

3rd February, Kaloo, 23 koss.—I am in a camel team ; four fine camels in pairs, upon each camel a wild, long-haired individual, and a roomy hooded English phaeton, forming my lordly equipage. Sixty horsemen under a Rissaldár form my body guard, and I am attended on camel-back by a special Wukeel, acting as my Maihmundár or guest keeper, who purveys all supplies, and by other outriders similarly mounted—a numerous, and I may add, a dust-creating retinue. But I am so comfortably boxed up, that I am master of the interior position, free from all observation, and well provided. I can smoke, lie at full length, sleep, read, and even write, though in hieroglyphics from the constant motion ; but the camels step softly, the movement is noiseless and not unpleasant, being through sand with never a stone, and jolting seldom..

Bidding farewell to Coleridge, whose hospitality and attention have been unbounded, I left Bikaner last night thus equipped, in a dust storm, 'mid the booming of a salute from the Maharajah's fort ; the cannon-flashes gleaming dimly through the murky atmosphere. Sand lay heavily the whole way, and it was surprising that the direction should have been so unerringly followed ; but we are headed by a bhoomiah, or guide, gravely seated on a Sánduee camel, accompanied on foot by a

professional tracker, personages who are seldom at fault as to the right way, however dark the night or uncertain the track. Three villages lay on the route, at each of which a short halt and the usual presentation of compliments from the headmen, but notwithstanding which and an occasional jolt, I made out the night contentedly. But after the sun had risen this morning the journey was hot and wearisome, to which the sameness of the aspect, a dreary waste, in some measure contributed; for it was not till past noon that we pulled up here for refreshment and to administer some goor mixed with *bhung* to the camels, by which to sustain them through the next long pull. Kaloo is a large place, dominated by a ghurree or fortalice. We halted close to a chetrie, and I was able to boil up my kettle and refresh myself with some tea. We then pushed on.

Suttee
Manu-
scripts.

*v. p. 218.

I examine the documents and lists promised by the Maharajah.* They contain revolting details of acts of suttee, performed by the females of the reigning family; and although the papers exhibit the names of one hundred and fifty-two wives and others, who submitted to be burnt with the bodies of their deceased lords, I think the count falls short of the full cup of horrors, the several named Maharajahs for whom the immolations were endured, not being represented, perhaps, in the correct order of actual succession, nor comprehending all the rulers of the dynasty indicated. Thus the suttees performed for the first three Maharajahs of the series :—

- Biká Sing, the founder of the principality,
Loonkurrunjee and Jetseejee, who died
at Bikaner and whose chetries are
situated immediately without the city
gateway called the Hurmál-ká-
báree—. numbered 41
- Maharajah Kullián Mulljee, at Devi-
Koondh (wives five, handmaids ten,)
died A.D. 1546 „ 15
- Maharajah Ray Sing (wives three, hand-
maids three) „ 6
- Maharajah Dulput Sing, killed at Ajmere,
on the news of whose death reaching
Bhutnêre (called also Hunnoomángur,)
the temporary capital, his six ranees
performed suttee there, the spot being
marked by a chetrie „ 6
- Maharajah Soorsingjee, or Sooruj Singjee,
died in the Deccan, upon which his
female household similarly ascended the
pyre, at Devi-Koondh, (wives two and
handmaids two) „ 4
- (Maharajah Sooruj Singjee's son, Chut-
tur Saal, is next mentioned incidentally
in the list, as having been killed by a
tiger "while hunting in the Lukhee
jungles" (in Scinde,) but no suttees
consequent thereon are mentioned.
- Maharajah Sooruj Singjee's son, Urjun
Sing, at Devi-Koondh, (one wife) . . . „ 1
- Maharajah Kerné Sing, died at Aurung-
abad, on the announcement whereof, his

eight wives and twelve handmaids committed suttee at Devi-Koondh	total 20
Maharajah Anoop Sing, "died at Delhi," on news of which reaching Bikaner, his two ranees, sixteen handmaids, and a slave girl, committed suttee at Devi-Koondh	„ 19
The daughter of Maharajah Kurrin Singhjee, named Bichuttur Kour, on learning of the death of her husband, Súrtaam Sing, son of Raj Sing, Rána of Oodipoor, committed suttee at Bikaner	„ , 1
Maharajah Shoján Singhjee died at the village of Raysingpoora, upon which his single ranee, nine handmaids, and a slave girl, committed suttee at Devi- Koondh	„ 11
Maharajah Jooráwur Sing, died at Anoopshér, his suttees at Devi-Koondh being two ranees, twenty handmaids, and the Brahminee water-carrier	„ *23
* The num- ber re- corded on the slab, being 22, p. 216. Maharajah Anund Singhjee, two ranees and two handmaids, at Devi-Koondh	„ 4
Maharajah Koowur, or Prince Motee Singh, with whose corpse his single wife committed suttee at Devi-Koondh	„ 1
<hr/>	
Total	„ 152

* Note it was stated to me at this ruler's chetrie at Devi-Koondh, that he died at Bikaner: it was also said that he died in the Deccan—so that the slab seen by me, must be described as a cenotaph only.

In some instances this account differs, though in a small degree, from that mentioned in my personal visit to Devi-Koondh, where the royal cremations mostly took place (*vide* p. 210;) and in regard to the suttees of Maharajah Sooján Sing there is also a difference as to the number of his wives as represented in the local sculptured group of women who were sacrificed on that occasion. My own account fortunately happens to be below the statements supplied in the papers examined by me. It is happier to be within the tale in such enumerations, if by only two or three, than to have added to them; but the array is a dreadful record, and the compassion it creates is intensified by the thought of the often pretty names by which the poor victims of the shockingly cruel custom, here familiarly known in the households they traced, and which, I will say, by the hard fate that awaited them, they even hallowed.* A contemplation of the nominal list that has been furnished to me, "calls down pity from the golden sky"—for among those names, all love-bound and

* P.S.—If we are horrified at the account above taken from the local record of these awful sacrifices, what shall we say to the fact that now, comparatively recently ago, or, that is, shortly before our war with the Sikhs, when the Punjab Rajah Heera Sing caused the murder, near Lahore, of Suchêt Sing, Rae Kessôree Sing, and Bheem Sing, who had contested with him the supremacy of the kingdom, the widows and slaves of the first named of those three persons, Suchêt Sing, to the number of *ninety-five females*, burnt themselves, or rather, were burnt as suttees on his funeral pyre! A wide field for speculation this, as displaying the whole machinery of the soul wrought up to an unusual pitch" by the prospect of so cruel and declared voluntary death!

The Home
Names of
the
Suttees.

expressive of tender endearment, some like these illuminate it : Ray Queen, Sun-ray, Love's Delight, Garland, Virtue Found, Echo, Soft Eye, Comfort, Moon-beam, Love-lorn, Dear Heart, Eye-play, Arbour-born, Smile, Love-bud, Fate, Glad Omen, Mist-clad or Cloud-sprung—the last a favourite name :

“ Of them who, wrapt in earth so cold,
No more the smiling day shall view,
Should many a tender tale be told ;
For many a tender thought is due.”

The
Mystical
Maze.

I look over also the other papers received from the Maharajah. One is a plan or copy of a large brass “juntur,” which we saw in a prominent position in the Jain Temple of Parisnáth at Bikaneer. It is, I believe, a kind of allegorical almanack, indicating, in some mystical way, not only the epoch in which the edifice was planned and erected 375 years ago, but also its design. It is circular in form, and is surrounded by a series of lines forming maze-like passages into its central part, beginning at one side of the convolution and terminating at the opposite side where entrance into the magic circle, so to call it, is at length effected round by a curious symbol. The interior space is marked off, amphitheatre like, into two circlets, which again are subdivided into a succession of compartments or divisions of time and space, as though they were both periods and cloisters, each with an inscription in it ; and the very centre or core of the whole elaboration, contains another strange talismanic symbol, entrance

into the very central point or heart of which (after passing by what seem to be two formidable eyes placed at two several parts of the tortuous labyrinth,) is eventually reached where there is another inscription signifying, I suppose, as well the initial point of *Time* as the *Presence* itself.* This temple, or mundur, dedicated to Parisnath, or Purswanáth, or Lord of the Universe (i.e. Boodh,) is commonly called the Mundur of Bundásir, one "Bunda" having been its architect and builder.

* P.S.—I have since thought it was meant to denote the mystic OM, the ineffable name and first manifested light of both Jews and Hindus.

Another curious document supplies representations of the sūhya, or signs or symbols, engraved upon two other brass plates, which we had observed to be placed fronting the quadruple marble image of Boodh, noticed in my visit to the same temple. One of these marks, or symbols, is of intricate formation of crossed straight lines, and is called the swūsteek, bearing reference, I suppose, to the swūsth, or *state of repose*, in which Boodh is generally represented; and the other, which is called the mungálic, the meaning of which I am unable to derive, would seem to be some figurative epigraph of a complex nature, resembling those rectangular configurations which may sometimes be seen in old balustrades. Both quaint devices were said to be the god's implied signatures, or *sign manuals*, imagined certainly by very fertile brains, the cryptology whereof is best known, we may at once admit, to the Jain High Priest alone! Enough of this research and of these curious and perplexing documents; I tie all up and lay them by, disappointed at not finding among them the

Symbolic Documents.

promised copy of the Map of the World, which had so much astonished me, as conceived from the account of its formation given in their sacred writings.⁷ And thus passed this day's drive.

On the
Way.

4th February, *Bisásir*, 45 koss from *Bikaneer*, or half-way to *Sirsa*, through *Sheksir*, *Sooe*, and *Mulkásir* at dawn. We pulled up at this stage at 9 a.m. for breakfast. The spot lies in a shallow dry basin, encircled by low sand hills. The country passed over to this point preserved the same dreary appearance, only diversified by villages at long intervals, and with bushes of camel thorn, happily abundant, and occasionally with the low desert trees, the *Khéjra*, and the *Keel* or *Kurreel* (wild caper bush,) the latter only met with in the village hollows. A man, or two men upon a camel, conveying something away, lawfully or unlawfully possessed; or two women upon a camel, one young, the other older, led by a grim-visaged man on foot; an armed man on foot, followed sometimes by a woman; a child in a young woman's arms, or seated between her and her elder companion astride the camel's hump; or some weird-looking buffalo or lean kine trying to browse; or a couple of deer standing not far off to behold us passing; or as we approach a village a mangy dog or two, a few scavenger kites circling over it, or the constant crow, and now oftener, the big

⁷ P.S.—I have since seen one something like it in the Duomo at Florence, digested from the Book of Genesis, being a succession of pictures as crudely conceived as are the carved stone pannelings which front the steps leading up to the entrance of the Cathedral at Milan

black raven—such were the objects now and then met with as we progressed through the solitude—fit region for the banded robber to retreat to or to sally from. Bisásir comprises just a small quadrangular mud fort, surrounded with groups of thatched huts, cone-shaped and circular, each batch set round with a packed thorn fence. Being the seldom recurring European, I am, of course, stared at by the villagers congregated round our bivouac, except I break through them and walk right away, as I did for the sake of the intermittent exercise. We pushed on after a while, the camels having been here changed. For there has now been a relay at every stretch of six or so koss, supplied by the nearest village; and in this there is no difficulty, village camels being accustomed to draft owing to their being commonly used for ploughing, the sand-laid ground required for cultivation being beyond the ability of ordinary cattle to prepare it for it. The Sárwáns or camel postilions, manage to urge on their animals surprisingly, although unspurred. A few untranslatable but understood words, the occasional use of a long stick, and sundry reminders from the heels, kept the patient brutes from flagging and up to the mark. These camelmen are mostly Kaim-Khánees, a sect converted from Hindooism, a fine erect race and enduring, many of whom are Dacoits. One of my best approvers is a Kaim-Khánee. These converted races, of whom there are several in Rajpootanah, are said to be always cruel and ferocious; but some are very honest too,

The
Camel
Pos-
tilions.

* V. P.
191-2.

and when engaged to convey property, are, as I have said, faithful to their employers, although ready enough to combine in robbing the property of others.* Four other Sárwáns also attend us upon camels ready to replace those in the team, if required. A couple of confidential Darôghas, or managers, mounted upon camels, are also of the party, to whom are entrusted all the posting arrangements of the route. At evening I got out and wandered off the way with my gun, and had a shot at a buck. He was, I thought, struck, but he went too far away in the waste to be followed. I also saw a tillowra or Floriken.

5th February.—Through Kánsir, Thirrána, Nenávo, and Nôhur, which last was reached at dawn, and there we overtook my camp then on the point of moving on. Nohur was a large Tuhseel town, belonging to a Shekawátie chieftain, and the residence of the Hakim or governor of the district. He called and presented a lot of sweetmeats, which my camp servants were glad to have transferred to them. Pushing on from Nohur, we passed by Ramsirra to Peephümmah, the last village in Bikaneer territory, reaching it in the forenoon for some breakfast. The country was now open, and the sand hills being left behind, we made faster way. Desirous to reach Sirsah as soon as possible in the day, we pushed on and got to Madô-Singána, the first village in British territory; then on to Mungôla, and finally arrived at Sirsah at about 2 p.m., thereby comfortably accomplishing the 170 miles or so of journey, in

three nights and two and a half days. Thus ended the camel drive—through a tract of country which had all the accompaniments of a wilderness, deeply laid with sand, and spread with sand hills, its villages at far intervals, water often brackish and only procurable from wells of great depth, rain a seldom occurrence and partial, pasture very little and uncertain, and cultivation and subsistence often precarious. Yet with all these disadvantages, of which the uncertainty of the periodical rains was the greatest, the inhabitants seemed contented and even happy, although there was a good deal of what seemed *furtive* about them. Captain Tait is the British police officer at this post, and he has kindly taken me in. Weather quite cold since yesterday, and gloomy.

6th February, *Sirsah*.—Slept delightfully in Tait's bungalow, and did not even hear my people arriving during the night and pitching my tents close by, which was a wonder, for natives make a great hubbub when arriving off a journey. I visited the local jail at an early hour. It is quite a model jail. Its lofty walls are shielded by a covered way running round its top. It has an outer and an inner ditch at the foot of the walls, and upward-sloping towers at its four corners, resembling the castles of a chess board. The prisoners in it were warmly clothed, and looked sleek, and being told off to healthful although hard labour, they ate with eagerness their diet of curried meat, curried *shôrwah* or soup, and wheaten cakes. This was served out to them

The
Sirsah
Jail.

plentifully while I was there. They sat down on the ground in lines without reference to castes, and all promiscuously partook of the food set before them. I was astonished at this, for there is generally so much difficulty in the matter of food, owing to caste prejudices, and this innovation in prison discipline is a remarkable one if it should not some day lead to a breaking out. Tait said no complaint had yet been made to him on the subject.

I dismiss the camel convoy with suitable acknowledgments, and also send away all the king's horsemen, retaining only a duffedar and four sowars to accompany me on my contemplated visit to Shekawátie, and write, through Coleridge, my thanks to the Maharajah for the excellent arrangements made by the persons he had deputed to accompany me, but for which, I added, I should have found the journey a hard one. I write also to Blair, and as a heavy post awaited me here, I have had a busy day.

Com-
pensation
for Mail
Rob-
beries.

Apropos to my recent reference to the private secretary on the subject of compensation from native chiefs for mail robberies within their territories (*vide* p. 133,) I learn among other matters, that both Scindiah and the Rao of Cutch strongly object to that ruling, and have requested that it may be modified. If other rulers follow this example some revision may be looked for, and I much hope it may be so. Some alternative expedient might be devised—the present one being so calculated to give offence.

Sirsah is an uninviting place. It is inhabited chiefly by Mahomedanized Bhutties. The town is certainly somewhat a large one, but the situation has a deserted appearance, kurreel or wild caper bushes being its principal feature, relieved only by the high jail walls and by a diminutive church. I commend the jail to Coleridge's notice for adoption at Bikaneer. As a stop-gap in the line of surveillance over the contiguous border in that direction, Sirsah has been well selected as a post of observation; but the position is a forlorn one, not being in a ready enough touch with our other more inward stations. The Bhutties of this neighbourhood have the character of being robbers and turbulent.*

Exhibitions like those at home have been rare in India, but the example is being followed with great success by Mr. Temple, the energetic Chief Commissioner of the newly organized Central Provinces. Only lately did he inaugurate one at Nagpore, his capital; and now another has, I

* P.S.—Hansi-Hissar, a very large district in the province, called Hurriana, anciently so called from being inhabited chiefly by the worshippers of Hurri, a cognomen of their god Mahadeo, was the principal location or cradle of these Bhuttees, one of several Hindu tribes along this frontier half converted from Hinduism (*vide* p. 113.) On their being dispossessed of Bhutnêre, their capital, as before related (p. 208,) they became a very pestilential race of plunderers, and during the anarchy which prevailed preceding our rule, they used to carry their plundering expeditions to within thirty miles of imperial Delhi itself, and were held in such fear by the people, that it was said "that a single Bhuttee with his sooh or long spear, and mounted on a shaggy pony, would put to flight a whole village of people."

The Jubbulpore Exhibition. learn to-day, just been held at Jubbulpore, the station of our depôt of approvers and School of Industry, and much praise was adjudged to the manufactures turned out from the latter institution—upon its woollen carpets, tents, linen of sorts, etc., the work of the reclaimed offspring of our Thug and Dacoit approvers and prisoners. Major Ranken, who superintends those establishments, fully deserves the notice taken of them. I am pleased, too, at the admiration bestowed upon the show of beautiful roses, and the awards on this account. Limited before to the ordinary kinds, the choicer sorts exhibited were the product of a stock introduced by myself at much expense from distant Belgaum, that well-called Garden of India, where I had reared many kinds of them—for there was then no railway so high up as Jubbulpore, where I was then stationed. Rose cultivation thereupon became quite a mania among the local European community, not only there but throughout the Central Provinces. The specimens sent for by me comprised thirty-four varieties of the plant, which upon propagation, were distributed till every station of the newly-formed Province was provided with them, and roses abounded in every garden. My own great success in the pleasant occupation, was in budding several sorts upon a single stalk or standard, and getting them all to bloom together. From a single specimen brought up by me in a diminutive flower-pot from Bombay, I also succeeded in introducing the arrow-root, which too is now much grown at Jubbulpore.

School of Industry.

Roses.

7th February, Jódka, 13 miles.—Walked the first six miles, and rode the rest in my bullock cart. The country was almost a dead level for some miles, and thickly covered with caper bushes or kurreel, the roots of which furnish, as at Babylon (*vide* "Journal" of May, 1857,) a fine heat-retaining fuel. To the distant left, the low and barren undulations of the sand desert were still in view. By-and-by the kurreel got scarce, and the plain became bare and unsheltered, save where baubool trees marked the sites of seldom villages. We have now come upon a made road, and progress is easier. My tents have been pitched on an open "prow" or camping ground, close by a police station and a rest house, the interminable Salt Custom's hedge of thorns mentioned before (p. 92,) flanking a portion of the ground. These "rest houses," now commonly existing throughout the districts under the Punjab administration, are a kind of Europeanized serai or walled enclosure for travellers and their cattle, with a single entrance into the yard or square, and a tower at each end of the front face, each tower divided into rooms, one set for occupation by Europeans, and the other for Natives. Numerous coveys of the swift-winged Burr-Teetur, or Indian grouse, were to be seen throughout the earlier part of the day in rapid flight across the plain to and from their accustomed drinking places. It is generally only on their alighting at such spots that approach to these wily birds is acquired. My clerk, Mr. Clements, brought me a brace of them. He also

Punjab
Rest
Houses.

shot a brown crow. The white crow is also occasionally to be met with in these regions. Floriken abound at this season, of which we had a couple at dinner last night at Captain Tait's.

Jôdka is one of our numerous Salt Customs stations, to be met with at long intervals along the preventive hedge. A Mr. Forster is the patrol officer in charge of it at this point. He is a grandson, I believe, of the celebrated "Major Forster," the special Commandant of what was known as the Shekawátie Brigade quartered on this frontier and long since unwisely disbanded. He lives with his family (a sickly wife and a numerous troop of children,) in a small government bungalow, and is the sole European on the spot. His supervision extends over a beat of twenty-nine miles of the great Hedge, his duty being to prevent smuggling of both salt and sugar.

Hear a rumour of a dacoitie somewhere near the Bikaner frontier, of recent occurrence, which, if true, we shall learn more about presently (*vide* p. 373.)

Desert
Game.

8th February, Futtiabad, 14 miles.—Arrived here at a late hour, caused by my stopping half way near a piece of water where grouse numerously alighted in a succession of flights. No sooner does one lot descend, than all forthwith hop to the water's edge, hastily drink, and take to wing again as hurriedly, as though to give place at once to the succeeding covey, for covey follows covey in rapid succession, or to make room for deer or other thirst-seized birds or animals inhabiting the proximity. I was thus easily able

to bag seven very fine birds. The grouse here met with are called peeluk, from their yellowish brown plumage; their wings are angular and pointed, and their bodies are marked zebra-like with deep dark-brown stripes. By some they are distinguished as the Cashmere Teetur, or "Chuckôre" and are prettily declared to "drink of the moon-beams." I also came upon a hare and some antelope.

At full length in a bullock cart like my own, met on the way, and comfortably smoking a long meerschaum, was a portly gentleman bearded like a pard, a king of Nineveh, or a priest of Nisroch, and well bronzed. He was travelling to Sirsah, where to officiate at church next Sunday. The necessity to visit small European communities round about periodically, often befalls clergymen in India, whose chaplaincies lie at remote stations unlinked with any nearer assistance; and when cholera or other epidemic is flying about, the duty is attended with risk. In the present instance the traveller was the Chaplain of Hissâr, fifty-six miles from Sirsah.

Within a dismantled fort on an eminence commanding Futtiabad, are the Dák Bungalow, the Tuhsildar's Cutchêrrie or office of the Native Revenue Collector, and some other government buildings, access to which is reached by a road leading through the old town; and on the opposite side of the fort, in a recess close under its wall, by a well in a thicket of hère or jujube trees, is the tomb of a British officer who was killed many years ago in an engagement near Sirsah.

The
Indian
Grouse.

A Church
of Eng-
land
Clergy-
man on
Tour.

Old Tomb
of a Slain
British
Officer.

with an insurrectionary band of a local people called Pucháda, a race of half Mahomedanized Rajpoots of a lower order, of whom there are several subdivisions, as Bhuttee, Sookhêra, Toour, Râees, Rangur, etc. (*vide* p. 249.) His body is traditioned to have been brought here by a local Fucqueer. The slab of the ponderous structure had been abstracted—a common thievish practice throughout India—so that nothing more was to be learnt of the occurrence than that the deceased officer's traditioned name was *Brandis Sahib*. The inhabitants are chiefly Râees, one of the proselyte tribes above enumerated, said to have emigrated from Jesulmere to escape local persecution after conversion to Islam.

Story of
some old
Thugs.

In olden days, some generations back, Futtiabad, under another name, was the abode of Thugs, who were a pest in the region round about. A person named Ameer Shah rose to an important local position. He was a man of great piety, but stern and energetic withal. His measures against the Thug colony were so severe, that to pronounce his name only among them, served to terrorize them. He allowed them but short shrift, "for you must die this instant." They thereupon ceased to commit Thuggee within those limits, and carried their expeditions to more remote parts. Such was indeed the talismanic effect of that individual's name generally, that it became a habit to take it in every record or proceeding of the place, and every proclamation is even at the present day coupled with it. For at his death he was canonized

for the good he had effected, and a mausoleum was erected over his grave. It is situated within the precincts of the old fort, and is carefully coloured and kept in good repair. He became, indeed, the tutelary pir or saint of the place, and his tomb a shrine. Every local public address is, following the old custom, headed with the exclamation "Khūlk Khooda ka, Nuggurree Shah Ameer ki, Hookum Mullik Mooazzimma ka"—"The people are the Lord's, the town is Shah Ameer's, the Government that of the great Queen" (Victoria.) For the pir had converted what was a village into a town, and changed its name to Futtiabad, or "the abode of victory!" The fort was built at a subsequent date by a Nuwáb of Májra, a place five miles distant, named Ameer Mahomed, a Deputy of the Emperor of Delhi. The region would, however, seem to be still occasionally haunted by the Thug fraternity, for at this moment there is under trial at Rhôtuck, the chief district station, a Thug poisoner named Rôra Meerásee, on a charge of Thuggee by poison, the scene of the murder being the very prow or ground where I am encamped.

The country hereabout is differently designated, Local Classification of the Waste. Bágur being applied to the desert and sparsely habited tracts of southern Rajpootanah trending to Bikaneer, or comprising, in other words, the country of the Teebas, or Sand Hills; Dábun northwards, where the ground is hard; and Sôhut, or low and liable to be inundated, as in this neighbourhood. But the term Bágur more correctly

appertains to the entire desert waste, from the habit of its inhabitants of surrounding their dwelling-places with "Bágur," those hedges of packed thorn which I have noticed.

A Thug
Poisoner.

Rôra the Meerásee (a class of hereditary singers,) the poisoner above adverted to, had once before been taken up for a similar act of crime in this direction. The evidence being insufficient he was transferred to Jeypore to answer for a previous case committed in that territory. He asked his two custodians on his way there, to let him go into his house which was on the road, and the visit being allowed, he brought away some sweetmeats, which by-and-by he produced and offered to the men of his escort "for their kindness to him"; who, seeing him eat thereof, accepted and ate some too. In due course they dropped senseless on the road, the sweetmeat having been drugged. His next feat was to poison at Májra, in this vicinity, the driver of a bullock hackery or cart which he and a companion had hired, and to appropriate both cart and bullocks. This was one of a series of similar cases of occurrence in a single season, in the North-West Provinces, in Oudh, Bendlecund, and in these districts, one of the gangs committing which (including the leader, one Hurlpursád,) had been successfully prosecuted and brought to justice by my assistant, Major Chamberlain. The particular practice was to select cart drivers as their victims, to hire their conveyances, to travel several stages in them, beguiling meanwhile the drivers with stories invented for the

occasion, such as that the travellers were emigrating on account of the prevailing scarcity, had lost their wives, or had wasted their means in distant pilgrimages, etc., by exciting their sympathy with which their confidence would be acquired, and the opportunity at length found to poison the poor fellows' food, or to drug their tobacco or their drink. On insensibility appearing, it became an easy matter to lay by the victims somewhere, dead or alive they did not care, to proceed with the appropriated conveyance across country and dispose of both the cart and bullocks on easy terms at some distant town or village. That done, they would proceed on foot till they met some other victim, the possessor of a bullock cart, or of some *Ekhee* the small two-wheeled cupolaed conveyance drawn by a single pony, so often engaged by travellers along the high roads, or the owner of some baggage pony or camel, whom similarly to drug and dispossess. The present would seem to be a revival of that artifice and mode of procedure in the system of Thuggee by means of poison, or *Datoorea Thuggee* as the crime is departmentally called, *datoora* being the baue more commonly used.

It appears that in the instance referred to, *Rôra* was accompanied by an accomplice. The two, hired a cart-driver to take them some little distance. They pulled up on the way to refresh and smoke—further on they halted for the morning meal. A *pooree*, or sweet puff, was offered to the cart-man, and some sugar, which accepting, he ate, and the journey was renewed. At *Mújra* the man

Thuggee
by means
of Poison.

Bullock
Cart
Driver
Poisoned
and
Robbed.

began to feel unwell; he lay down in the cart, and they drove it on. The last thing the man remembered was, that the strangers pulled up the cart, and, unyoking the bullocks, gave them some provender. They did not tell him their names and only casually said *they had come from Bhurtpore* (which was true.) They robbed his cart and bullocks. Rôra's next performance was in the neighbourhood of *Hissár*, hard by here, in which he drugged and robbed a man named *Mámun*. He next hired a camel on two successive occasions in the same neighbourhood, poisoned their owners, and rode away with their camels. In two of these cases he was accompanied by a female named *Chándnee*, and was associated with some other accomplices.

Pois-ners
disguised
as
Marriage
Agents.

Next took place the following: A man named *Oodmee* was observed by some cultivators ramb-ling about "as though he was *drunk*," in the limits of the village of *Bháproda* in *Rhôtuck*. They conveyed him to the police-station, whence he was taken to the *Rhôtuck* hospital, where, after recovering recollection, he disclosed that some little time back he had met at the village of *Buniance*, near *Rhôtuck*, a man who was accompanied by two young women; that being a widower and desirous of a wife, he got into conversation with the man, who described himself as a resident of *Rewaree* in the Goorgaon district, by name *Khájooa*, by caste a *Dôme*, and offered to select a suitable bride for him and to arrange all the preliminary negotiations in view to their marriage; that the man then engaged to pay him a visit at his address in a

fortnight's time, "when he would acquaint him with the progress he had made"; that the two then proceeded together to Rhôtuck and there separated. Fifteen days thereafter, the man calling himself *Khájooa*, presented himself at the narrator's dwelling, with the information that he had found "the sort of young person with whom to arrange his marriage," that she resided in the adjoining native territory, and "*was indeed now awaiting him at Buniánee.* Oodmee thereupon accompanied the declared marriage agent, and at mid-day the two alighted near a tank at *Rôhúd* on the Delhi road. *Khájooah* there proposed that they should take some refreshments, and there being some caste difficulty as to the preparation thereof, he extended some sugar to him, for, explained Oodmee, "*being of a superior caste I was unable to partake of food that should be cooked by a Dome*"! He ate, however, the proffered sugar, along with some parched grain which he had in his own wallet, and the two then proceeded a couple of miles. Here Oodmee felt his senses whirling and his limbs to become powerless; and presently he lost all consciousness. When he rallied, he discovered that he had been robbed of all his money, as well as of a new coat he had purposed putting on when appearing before his expected bride! The criminal thus described was hereupon tracked from place to place by the Rhôtuck police, under its very energetic superintendent, *Mr. Charde*, from British into native territory and back again.

In the meantime the culprit *Rôra* perpetrated

Rôra's
most
Recent
Exploit.

the case which occurred as I have said, at the spot where I am encamped. He had engaged a camel which was in the hired charge of a man of the *Vishnowee* tribe, and with him come on to this place (Futtiabad,) and here he poisoned the man and went off with the camel towards Hissár. At morning the dead body of the man was found among some bushes on the local camping ground, partly devoured by jackals and already in an advanced state of decomposition. It was identified by the clothes upon it, and there was evidence besides, that Rôra had come to Futtiabad along with him and had left it alone. The occurrence was unknown at Hissár when he arrived there with the stolen camel during the course of the same night. He was, however, taken into custody there on the mere suspicion of being some bad character, but he managed the following night, to escape from the police lock-up and to get clear away. And now the search by the Rhôtuck police in the matter of the previous affair of *Oodmee*, reached Futtiabad, and from there was carried on to Hissár itself, where only to learn that its object was probably the man *who had just escaped from there*, and identical with *him who had then recently poisoned the camel man at Futtiabad*. *But a walking-stick which was taken from him when he was arrested*, was at once recognized by the man *Oodmee*, and this removed all doubt that the escaped man was identical with the *soi-disant Khájooa Dôme* whom the Rhôtuck police were in pursuit of! Here further material clue was lost, but as it had been

discovered that the fugitive occasionally visited two women named *Lálee* and *Sáhibee*, the same decoys in whose company he had been seen when pretending to be a marriage agent, who resided at *Bhurtpore* and that his wife *Uhandnee* also occasionally accompanied him in his expeditions, the pursuit was carried to *Bhurtpore*, and from there he was eventually traced and arrested by the authorities of the *Puttiála* State, at *Nárnoul*, where he was found reeling about the bazaar in a state of drunkenness. Some *suttoo* or flour, commingled with *Datoora* powder, the medium through which the drug is generally administered mixed with food, was found in his possession. We have thus nine cases of the crime against this fellow, and I must endeavour to get him to turn approver. He would be useful as such after sentence of death or life transportation has been passed upon him, for he has accomplices. It is to be hoped he will not get away from his present custody at *Rhôtuck* also! ⁹

In one of the cases above narrated, the poisoner assumed, it will be observed, to be an agent for contracting marriage alliances. This, too, would seem to be a revival of a similar practice, if it has indeed been ever forsaken. The device used often to be adopted by Thug poisoners higher up in the Punjab, and was also sometimes resorted to lower down in India. In the Punjab a convict named

The Case
of
another
Pre-
tended
Marriage
Agent.

⁹ P.S.—*Rôra Meerásee* was on trial on these different charges, sentenced to transportation for a period in all of nineteen years.

Mootasuddes, who had committed many other acts of the crime under the ordinary procedure, inveigled and murdered by poisoning with *datoora*, as many as *nineteen* persons, under the one pretence of his being a "marriage agent," of occurrence mostly in the Kángra valley. In my report to the Government of India in his case, I showed that he had for twelve years successfully defied the local police, although the persons missing or whose bodies had been found, were openly known; and that it was solely through our special agency, under Captain McAndrew, at that period my assistant for the Punjab, that he was hunted down and "brought to answer for a long career of cold-blooded murder." He was executed, and the public generally warned of the artifices practised by such impostors in persuading people away from their homes on such pretences. Cases of that kind thereupon ceased for a time in that direction; but here it seems to be cropping up again! The man *Oodmee* only accidentally escaped with his life—the intention was to kill him.

Dacoities at
Sidhpore.

I receive confirmation of the Dacoities which was rumoured at Bikaner to have taken place recently "somewhere near Sidhpore" (*vide* p. 205.) The plundered consignment was of gold and silver and other valuables, laden upon five camels coming from Ahmedabad and intended for Pálee the desert *entrepôt*—but further particulars have yet to be received.

9th February, Agrôhur, 16 miles.—Grouse, rock partridge, and deer, to hand for the trouble—but I

shot one partridge only, and antelope I repeatedly missed. Walked the first six or seven miles, and rode the rest. The road is now *pucka*, that is, a properly *macadamized* one, and there was no dust, rain having laid it—pools of water on either side. Agrôhur gave its name to the enterprising race of Bunyas called *Aggurwâls*, who sprang up at this place and are now spread about India, and famed for their commercial prosperity.¹ For a very extensive city existed here in old, old times, which covered several miles of ground; tradition says *twelve koss*, which is unbelievable—but certainly there is indication everywhere of its wide extent. Several immense mounds, from which broken brick and pottery drop out, point out the site of some large fort or citadel which probably contained palace buildings. Another mound beyond these, and standing alone, was stated to be the spot where a palace stood, erected by one *Rajah Russdloo*, who came from Sealkote and ruled here, “an Aggurwâl Bunya, named *Hurbut Sha*, being then the Governor of the city.” Some other existing lofty mounds were formed, it was said, from the *deblai* of a large tank, constructed there by one *Lukkee*, another Aggurwâl Bunya. He had spent a lac of rupees in digging it out. The story goes, that a cow and her calf happened to call out to each other from the opposite sides of the sheet

¹ P.S.—“Aggarôa.—This is in the ancient province of Heriâna, and the cradle of the Aggurwâl race, now mercantile, and all followers of Heri or Vishnoo. It might have been the capital of the Aggrames, whose immense army threatened Alexander.”—(Foot-note, p. 769, vol. i. of Tod’s Rajasthân.)

of water thus formed, and that in endeavouring to reach each other, both were drowned in it. This was a great local reproach, and the sin of having been the cause of it an inexpressible one; so the good man, to propitiate the deity, spent another lac and a quarter of rupees in having the excavation *filled up again*, and those mounds were left to mark the site and commemorate the atonement! When any one desired to become a citizen of Agrôhur, the custom was, to present him with a brick and ten copper *pice*. These betokened, the *brick* that it confirmed his domiciliation, and the *copper coin* that he was admitted to be an equal with themselves and to become as wealthy. Such was the strange account, to which was added the legend that the immense city was founded and inhabited, in the remotest ages, by *Rákshás*, or devourers of Brahmins, more commonly called *Dámúns*, probably the origin, as it is the parallel, of our own word *demon*. They peopled a vast extent of country, and a neighbouring great mound is stated to have been the site of a temple reared in honour of one of those satanic majesties of cannibal appetites, who, after deification, was known as *Chundha Devi*, in awful reverence of whom a small shrine was raised and is still kept up on the spot. In regard to the *Lukkee Tulláo*, or mere, it is said of the wealthy local Bunya who constructed and destroyed it, and whose "Folly" it might more appropriately be called, that he acquired his vast riches by selling at first, the favourite spiced parched grain called *noon-kurráree*—the same kind of beginning

attributed to the wealthy Parsee baronet of Bombay, *Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy*, who commenced his mercantile career by selling *empty bottles*, collected by himself personally from the tents of European officers encamped on the Bombay esplanade, his well-known family surname being *Bottle-wálah* to the present day. Coins are often picked out here from the *débris* of the ancient city after rain. I obtained several copper specimens, evidently of very ancient date. A curious tradition, accounting for the obliteration of the City of *Agrôhur*, is, that it was destroyed from Heaven, not with fire and brimstone as the two cities of the Dead Sea were, but by an incessant and continuous falling of *dust* in an unprecedented *Andhee*, or blinding dust storm!

The district in which *Agrôhur* is situated, belonged, Agrôhur
Bricks. before our own advent, to the *Puttiála* State. A small square fortress, now itself in ruins, was here erected by one of its governors on the range of mounds, all the brick-work used in which were evidently obtained from excavations in the neighbourhood. These bricks are of a very hard kind, and kiln burnt. They are a foot square, sometimes a little larger, and resemble in shape and size, the cuneiform stamped bricks I saw among the ruins at Babylon (*vide* Journal for 1857;) but, whereas the latter were white, like *Bath bricks*, these are a black-red.

10th February, Sunday, *Hissár*, 13 miles.—Got through this march sooner than was expected by my people, who had not quite yet got my tent

ready. It is a cold windy morning and has been raining. Hear from Delhi that some mess kit of the 106th (my old regiment,) had been plundered by Dacoits, somewhere in Jeypore limits, on its march to the Punjab. I write off to Beynon and Blair about it and to my native officer in Shekawátie. It is even stated that some of the regimental camp followers were murdered on the occasion. (P.S.—This was only partially confirmed.)

Hissár. 11th February, *Hissár*.—Halt, to rest my followers, for they have been travelling incessantly since they left Bikaner, now fifteen days ago. Hissár was also formerly a large city, and the capital of the country called Hurriána. Its site is strewn with broken bricks of the old time. The ruined Palace of Feroze Shah, its founder, who also constructed a canal leading to it from the Jumna, stands in its centre. The modern city is surrounded by curtain walls, with circular bastions at intervals. The Government Breeding Stud used to be stationed here before its removal to Kurnál. In its place a Cattle Farm was established under an European Commissariat warrant officer, the district being famed for its fine breed of cattle, and a “Hánsi-Hissár” milch cow, is a coveted possession in European families. The European quarter without the city walls, improperly styled “cantonments,” for there are no troops here but only some police, is straggling and insecure. It would fare badly with the few European officials here stationed, if any outbreak suddenly occurred, of which what happened here in the Mutiny year, was an example.

A pretty little hamlet church, and an ill-designed monumental cross, in memory of the "victims of 1857," barbarously murdered at Hissár, are its *only* specialities. The city is thickly set with the habitations of its numerous dwellers. Three hundred and five wells, all now in a ruinous condition, show how populous this old *fenced* city must have been. ("Hissár" signifies a fortification.) Near the Palace was the pillar known as *Feroze Shah's Láth* or *Lát*. This last word *Lát*, signifying a pillar or a monolith, bears a strange analogy to the scriptural pillar of Lot's wife. Even in Hebrew the word "*Lát*" bears no other signification, and a more understandable version of that incident may have been—the name of Abraham's nephew being forgotten when the record was written—that she was suffocated, and her *form* became immediately encrusted *as if with salt*. For we are told the narrated destruction of the two "Cities of the Plain," was caused by brimstone and fire alone.

I visited Mr. Nasmyth to-day, the Commissioner for the entire division, whose head-quarters are here. The question of reciprocal pursuit and arrest between British and native territory, had frequently arisen along this frontier. The rules on the subject were intelligent enough, as recapitulated in my Report last year to the Government of India "On the state of the British law in regard to the pursuit, apprehension, surrender, trial, and punishment of criminals traced to and captured in Native States and *vice versâ*"—and as that report had been widely circulated, I was desirous to ascertain what

Khôj
Rules for
the Arrest
and
Pursuit of
Border
Criminal

Robbery
of a Con-
voy of
Piece
Goods.

the orders were that had been issued thereon, and whether they differed in any degree from the course prescribed in it; also what measures had been adopted for preventing false "*Khôj*" being taken into a neighbouring State. For some modification in those rules seemed in recent cases to have been introduced in the Rajpootanah transcript thereof, which rather militated, I have thought, against the simple law of a mutual extradition. I believe that Law to have been merely misinterpreted and therefore misunderstood. *Khôj* had, in consequence, been lately refused in *Khêtri* territory. A Dacoitie had been committed near Rhôtuck on a bullock cart train, laden with European piece goods, proceeding from Delhi to the mart at Bhewanie. Twelve men, mounted upon camels, attacked the convoy soon after it had become dark. They gagged and bound the men in charge, *seven in number*, and, transferring the goods to their own camels, made off. They broke through the great Salt Customs Hedge, and thus soon passed into *Shekawatie* in safety. The *Khôj* was taken up, and, according to the local police report, the plunderers were vigorously followed "in all their doubles and turnings," through portions of Puttiala and the other dove-tailing States, right up to their village in the *Khêtree* Lord's State. The Custom's Hedge and its numerous watchmen were of no account to the dacoits while escaping the *View hallo*; but detection from *Khôj* by trained trackers was not so easy to avoid. It was, however, positively declined, grounded not only on the alleged alteration in the

Khôj law, but a recrimination set up of unlawful and violent aggression on the part of the pursuers. The names of the leaders of the gang were, however, acquired in the pursuit, and I have proposed to endeavour to procure their arrest. Mr. Nasmyth was very accessible on the subject, and entered into it *con amore*. He deprecated any modification of the existing rule, and was inclined to the belief (rightly so,) that the imputed innovation in it was locally intended merely to guide the Rajpootanah States in their dealings in such cases with one another, and not to apply to cases connected with British territory bordering upon them. But I still believe it to be simply a misinterpretation, and that being so, it left the rules as laid down in my public report on the whole inviolate. I must refer this. I write to Mr. Thornton, secretary to the Punjab Government, accordingly. "*Khôj*" signifies the foot-print, track, or trace, of some man or animal; and the said *rules* appertain to the procedure in following it up.

Receive confirmation of the arrest at Ajmere of the two men, *Girdáree Sing* and *Oojein Sing*, while endeavouring to defraud the Customs, and of *Kishen Sing's* betrayal, as I was correctly informed of at Bikaner (*vide* pp. 181-82,) by the renegade Choutmull; but that his companion, *Hurree Sing*, had evaded arrest. I desire Blair to claim these men and proceed against them, and to be guarded against their getting away.

12th February, Oomrah, 14 miles.—Through two hamlets, both named Sâtrôde, and through *Bhuggána*

and *Sultánpoor*—*Hánsi* being four *koss* to the left. I should have liked to have gone there, for *Hánsi* occupies a prominent place in the history of this border region, but I was desirous to push on to *Bhewánie*. A directer route to it would have been by *Dádra*, *Ládooa*, and *Sultánpoor*. Unsuccessfully stalked some antelope by the way. Lost one of my dogs. These had chased a herd and returned without her. She will probably make her way back to our last camping-ground. The weather is much warmer, and I have a headache. There is a large tank at this place, constructed by a benevolent *Bunya*. The villages are of a better sort now, and the houses stand higher than hitherto was usual.

13th February, *Bullíálee*, 12 miles.—Through *Jemálpoor* half-way. Some Mahomedan buildings of a finer sort, give the latter place an appearance of consequence. The country is now quite open, but a detached range of low rocky hills, stands prominently out of the otherwise undeviating plain, south-eastwardly. One of the hills marks the site of a place of some note called *Toshám*, about half a dozen miles distant, in a fort whereon, State prisoners were confined in the time of the Moghul Emperors. The country round about, is now mostly inhabited by *Rángurs*, before noticed as a class of Mahomedan converts, who formerly were ill-born Rajpoots (*vide* p. 254,) but they still preserve many of their Hindoo rites and observances, resembling in this matter the *Káim-Khánée* and other similar proselytized people residing in

Rajpootanah (*vide* p. 113.) My lost dog, *Gill*, had wandered back to Hissár, and was brought in last night very tired. A similar occurrence happened to me on a tour in the Southern Mahratta country. A small bull terrier that accompanied me in the morning march, ran after some antelope and was lost more than a hundred miles distant from Belgaum, the station I resided at and had started from. A few days subsequently a letter from there, announced that the dog had come back to it. She probably had traced her way back from ground to ground where I had been encamped. Too much food was imprudently given to her on arrival, for she died the same day (*vide* Journal for 1845.) We met several herds of antelope on this morning's march.

14th February, *Bhewánie*, 10 miles.—Through *Sooce* and *Khurkhurric*. The way, a common cart track, was a very dusty one. And now we enter the sandy region once more, and approach uncertain territory, where robbers abound. The low hill range before alluded to, extends in this direction and is no more than about fifteen miles in length. It is a reappearance of the same ridge I have mentioned before as cropping up at intervals above the sand from *Jesulmere* to *Delhi* (*vide* p. 160.) *Bhewánie* is a large and populous seat of traders or *Mahájuns*, or rather where the *Goomásh-tahs* or agents of *Mahájuns* of different distant places foregather and mostly reside. It is indeed, the most important *entrepôt* in this upper part of India, lying, as it does, on the high commercial

road between the principal marts and cities of Rajpootanah, and *Delhi* and other cities of Upper India. Merchandise is conveyed to it in continuous strings of camels, through the contiguous desert regions, thus affording a constant enterprise to dacoits and robbers in general, but more particularly to *Mecna* and other freebooters infesting *Shekawátie*, that great nursery of the lawless. When stormed and taken by our troops in 1809, at a time when we began to conquer the districts round about *Delhi*, *Bhewánie* was only a village.

15th February, *Bhewánie*, Halt.—The Deputy Commissioner of the District, Major Fendall, dined with me last night. He is here on an official visit. The chief trade of *Bhewánie* is *salt*, imported from the *Sambhur Lake* and other *Uggurs* or salt deposits in that direction; and *goor* which is the inspissated juice of the sugar cane, and other sugars for conveyance to Rajpootanah. English piece goods, passed up from Bombay and dyed intermediately at distant *Páli*, are also brought here and taken on. The place is daily increasing in importance, and its many market streets are often choked up with camels and carts arriving with commodities from the desert countries on the one side, and from *Delhi* on the other—bales of cotton, packs of sugar, chests of opium (sometimes,) cotton stuffs from Manchester, and goods of every description. There is a busy talk of a morning, among the new arrivals, and an anxiety in the throng assembled in the market avenues, as though the place—this *camp bazaar*, this encampment by the way, of booths and

bales—of men, camels, and cattle—were an Exchange or some seat of public news. But the chief topic is, the mutual questionings are, the adventures of the road, whose goods had been plundered, who escaped, what *Masaniello* was now abroad, way-laying and carrying off, or levying blackmail, and where his latest foray! Fine fellows are these camelmen and carriers—rough and hardy—armed with matchlock, sword and shield—but the robbers are bolder and stronger; the fear they inspire is their vantage; the prey is great and the match an unequal one.

16th February, *Lohánee*, 11 miles.—Our route is now southward, and we have again entered the sandy region called “*Bágur*.” This is a Brahmin village. Fields of the greenest cultivation, shielded from sand drifts by thick hedges of thorn, redeem its appearance, surrounded as the situation is with deep *Teebas* or hills of sand. These patches are irrigated from wells worked by bullocks, but the depth at which the water is reached, is so great, that before the bullocks, just loosened from the further end of the draft rope, can return to the mouth of the well for another pull, a second pair is employed to draw up the next flow; and so they go on, every successive traction alternately.

Mr. Thornton, the Secretary to the Punjab *Khaj*. Government, replies to my reference about *Khaj*, that there was no doubt that the existing law of pursuit and arrest of criminals seeking refuge in the Native States of Rajpootanah from British territory, was in a very unsatisfactory state. My

* Page p.
267.

late Report, he added,* “would be of great service in drawing attention to the subject”; also that the recent alterations in the Rajpootanah International Code, as respecting the “Khôj” system (*vide* p. 269,) did not work well so far as the Punjab was concerned.

17th February, Sunday, Jootee, 8 miles.—Through deep sand—three *bánsees* or hamlets on the way. Meet a large convoy of bullock carts, laden with salt from *Deedwanah*, toiling on their way to Bhe-wánie. This village is inhabited by *Játs*, a diligent lot, who were busy the whole day, irrigating their crops from deep wells similarly worked.

Dádmah
in Jheend.

18th February, Dádmah, six miles.—A short march through a lot of sand hills. I walked it. We have now passed from British into the territory of the *Rajah of Jheendh*, one of the Sikh protected chieftains. Was met at the frontier by the chief local authorities, who politely expressed regret at not receiving earlier information of my visit, so that they might have made better preparations for my reception—as though they had not already abundantly supplied every want! British officers invariably meet with these civilities whenever they enter a Native State. It is the custom of Native Rulers, and would that we were equally attentive and thoughtful! Ours is a stereotyped bluntness, theirs a finished politeness and prevision. “Russud” or supplies, are anticipated, and await you on their camping ground. With us, such requirements, except for marching troops, or some official travelling with a large

camp, must be sought and purchased in the bazaar, whoever may be the visitor who wants them. They will drop this plan by-and-by of themselves, when railroads shall have blunted the illusion of our intercourse, and struck away some of the fallacious awe it is viewed with.

The wind to-day has been very high, introducing the sand through every crevice of the tent, and thoroughly powdering everything with it. The same wheat cultivation here as before. The peculiar singing cry of the husbandmen as they work their wells, resounds the whole day, and lasts too throughout the night, so industrious are they in attention to their crops. To be freer in a measure from the plague of the searching sand during the day, I had my office table moved to within a snug sand-beaten thorn enclosure under some sheltering trees, a nook in which I was comparatively happy.

Blair writes to-day from Eden's camp at Jálra-Pátun, where it had arrived after a pleasant march through *Harrowtie*, giving an account of a tiger adventure at Kowta :—"We killed him out of our boats as we descended the Chumbul. He seemed to be coolly awaiting our arrival on the bank of the river. A volley knocked him into the water, in which he struggled for some time, till shot through the head."

Tiger
Anecdote.

We have the following reported case under our notice, a repetition of the *bullock hackery cases* lately mentioned (*vide p. 257.*) A traveller hired a man's cart from Puttiála to Jheend, and when arrived a

Cart
Drivers
Poisoned.

few miles from the latter place, he contrived to drug the driver's food with some *Dhatoora*, whom, when he had become insensible, he lifted off and left there, and drove away his cart and bullocks. He was intercepted while taking them across the river in a ferry boat, and *the poisoned man's shoes and quilt* were found in his possession.

Another case comes from the Central Provinces. Two persons were travelling in a cart with some money. Near Nagpore they were joined by two other travellers. All journeyed together till arrived near their destination, and there they prepared their meal merrily within a garden enclosure. The two who had last joined, persuaded the previous two persons to take some of their *chutney* with their curry, soon after eating of which both became insensible, and in that condition were deprived of their money. The culprits were arrested at a police outpost, and not only was the whole of the money found in their possession intact, but one of them was even wearing the shoes of one of the drugged parties. Some *chutney* was also found with them. A similar *chutney* case comes from Khandeish, a Bombay district. A man, his wife, and two boys, come down from Hindostan, had, when halted at Pálásnair, been joined by a stranger, who proposed to accompany them, and which they allowed. When eating their food at the next place they stopped at, the stranger gave them some *chutney* to eat with it "as a relish." They lost their senses as usual, and as usual, were robbed of their little store

Chutney
Cases.

of money. There was no arrest in this case. Fortunately the victims recovered in each of these cases.

Yet another and more extraordinary case from the same Province was the following—it is an example of the deceits practised by these professional poisoners:—A woman visited a neighbour, leaving her baby to be looked after by her daughter, aged nine years. When she came back the daughter told her that a woman, sometime staying in the neighbourhood, had taken the child away, saying the mother had sent her for it. Eventually the dead body of the infant was found, buried under the other woman's cot. She explained that, having no child, she had consulted an itinerant *Gooroo* or priest, who said that she should have offspring if she would bring him some infant—that on her bringing the borrowed baby accordingly, he produced some limes, with which, and the child in his arms, he paced round her seven times, and then buried the infant under her cot, and exacted one rupee from her for the ceremony! The woman and the “Gooroo” were tried for the murder, and both were acquitted! The *pseudo* Holy Man was thereupon claimed by us as a professional poisoner, and was sent for identification to his declared place of residence in remote Tonk, but was ignored there by everyone. The child had been poisoned for the sake of its ornaments. The man's death of cholera has been reported.

Strange
Case of
Child
Murder.

The *Môghyas* are notorious for their depredations, and complaints against them by plundered parties *Môghyas* have been frequent. This department had, in my

predecessor's time, something to say to them, but the proceedings then taken up had not sufficient vitality to have any lasting effect, and they were abandoned by him. But the recent opium dacoitie near Indore, and the arrest for it of one of the Dacoits, as well as of the *receiver* of the plundered opium, a dweller in the Residency bazaar at Indore itself (*vide* p. 165,) and the mention moreover of several Môghyas as accomplices, in the lately recorded criminal narratives of some of our Meena approvers, and particularly in that of the captured Môghya dacoit himself in the opium case, have opened out to me a prospect of at length including them in our operations. I address the Assistant General Superintendent at Indore at length on the subject to-day, giving him a full account of the habits of the tribe as Dacoits, and directing measures against them. There is ample evidence of their "deep and treacherous character," and of the great dread they inspire, particularly in the region round about their safe retreat in Nimbahêra, where, owing to the prevailing intermixed jurisdiction, they have ever found ready sympathy and asylum.

19th February, Lohâroo, eleven miles.—A town and the chief place of the district so called. A *Nawâb* resides here. He sent me a basket of vegetables from his garden on my arrival, as a token of welcome. It was, alas! by this man's half-brother (I believe,) that Mr. William Fraser, Judge and Governor-General's Agent at Delhi, was murdered. This happened about thirty-five

Story of
the Murder
at
Delhi of
Mr.
Fraser.

years ago, when that gentleman was riding up, one Sunday evening, to his residence, known as "Hindoo Rao's House," situated opposite to the city, on the Delhi Ridge. That is to say, the murder was procured by the late Nawáb's son after his own accession to the fief of Ferozepoor, and he was hanged for it, as fully narrated before (Journal for 1864). His name was *Shumsodeen*, and what made it seem more revolting, he was a personal friend of the murdered gentleman. But the latter had (the secret story goes,) offended him on a point of honour on which Mahomedans, and indeed most Orientals, are keenly sensitive. Even among ourselves we should resent as an unwarrantable liberty and ill-mannered, although proceeding from one with whom we were, or as in this case, whose late father was more particularly on friendly or the friendliest terms,² any inquiry after the female members of one's family by their *home names*, with whom he was not acquainted, or to whom he had not been introduced. How much more a Mahomedan gentleman, with the female members of whose family *it is not possible* that any man, to say nothing of that man being of another race and religion, to have any

² P.S.—Both Colonel Skinner and Mr. William Fraser were the fast friends and frequent companions of the man's deceased father, *Ahmed Buksh*, the Nuwab of Lohároo and Ferozepoor, and to cement the friendship had even changed head gear with him, and thereby become his *Deen-i-bhai*, or adopted brothers, in India an inviolable covenant often more binding than blood relationship; and both were consequently regarded as the *bond fide* "uncles" of the accused man, Shumsodeen Khan. I was well acquainted with the survivors of the unhappy family.

acquaintance, much less to have been introduced to, whatever any compact of friendship between themselves? In the present case the acquaintance between the two gentlemen, strengthened by the intimacy with Shumsoodeen's late father, was, that they were mutually fond of field sports, and had often sought each other's company on such occasions, and were consequently on intimate and even familiar terms. But there was a line, and it was at an unwary moment overstepped, whence the affront and its lamentable results! The occasion is talked of with bated breath even to the present day among the city inhabitants, for great was the consternation which it had created. The man declared (it was whispered,) that his victim had inquired after his sister *by her name* (which should not even be known outside of Zenána precincts.)* He procured a Rohilla horseman, one *Kurreeem Khan*, to shoot him for this. The pistol or carbine with which this fellow, who was one of his most confidential retainers, did so, was found by a diver in the well outside of the *Moree Bastion*, of the Delhi Fort, into which the assassin admitted he had thrown it, and it was through Colonel Skinner's exertions that the circumstances of the case were discovered. Kurreeem Khan was hanged at the spot of the murder, and Shumsoodeen, the in-

* P.S., 1891.—In an account of this murder, narrated by one who took an active part in the investigation of it, given in the "*Asiatic Journal*" of the period, it was stated: "I found the prevailing opinion to be that Fraser had fallen a victim of some intrigue; and the fact that his life had been attempted before from a similar cause, seemed to favour the supposition."

stigator of the deed, was himself also executed later on, outside of the Moree Gate, in sight of Mr. Fraser's house, a body of troops being marched in from a neighbouring station to prevent any attempt at rescue. Mr. Fraser, always of a military turn of mind, was, with sanction of Government, the Honorary Second in Command of Skinner's horse, and Colonel Skinner was greatly attached to him.

In this morning's march we passed by several watch posts along the boundary of *Jheend* and *Lohároo* territory, where it impinges upon *Shekawátie*. For the fear of the *Sooleidæ* robbers, inhabiting the latter region, is great everywhere; who if they do not plunder a convoy, do not fail to exact blackmail for the immunity. For *Shekawátie* is a kind of federated fief held by several petty and semi-independent Thakoors under the *Jey-*^{The Black Mail Quadrilateral.}
pore Raj, originally five in number, each with his separate castle and retainers; and the territory composing it lies, as beforesaid (p. 232,) in between the triple border of *Jeypore*, *Marwar* and *Bikaneer*, and intercept the right of way to the regions above and beyond it. In advantage of this, the lawless Thakoor and self-constituted Warden of the position at *Lóhsna*, a thorn-fenced village on the edge of the last named territory (*Bikaneer*,) and about twenty distant from this place (*Lohároo*,) in concert with the similar lord of another coign called *Bódso* lying south on the *Marwár* frontier, these two, conjointly with the "Wardens" of *Buhtóte* and *Kheróre*, two other posts of observation situated in *Jeypore* limit, that

is, in *Shekawátie* where it adjoins Jeypore proper, exact blackmail on all merchandise passing through the tract compassed between those four points, and, with unchecked temerity, parcelled out between them *geographically*—that is to say, the right of levying blackmail on goods passing down from *Bhewánie* along the *Bikaneer* frontier, is reserved to the Warden at *Lóhsna* ; but when skirting along the *Marwár* boundary, it appertains to him of *Bódsô* ; or if a convoy follows the route which takes it through interior *Shekawátie*, the right to the impost becomes the claim of the lord of *Buhtôte* ; but when striking off to *Jeypore*, he of *Kheróre*, puts in an appearance for it. But woe betide the consignment that is *not* covered by this “protection duty,” or when the men in charge of it have evaded this payment of the *robbers’ rights* ! for sure it is to be plundered in some part of the dangerous route, and to become the inevitable prey of some band of mounted marauders at the beck of some one of those four brigand chieftains, pouncing down upon it, at onefell swoop, while yet within the evils of the entanglement, and perhaps at a moment when the carriers were congratulating themselves that they had emerged from and escaped them ! But on the other hand, submission to the impost at the points demanded, ensures safety from plunder, an engagement which is said to be faithfully observed. Thus do the chieftains of those four robber-holds, *lord it* despotically, levying blackmail each within the limits of his own sweep or lawless range, nobody checking them ! *

*P.S.—Blair gives an instance of a foiled endeavour to cheat

This morning's march was by two so-called "villages," which, as samples of many of the same kind, are noticeable. They were *Govindpoora* (a lofty name,) and *Joopa*, both mere clusters of small black, thatched huts set round with hedges of thorn, the former with no cultivation about it, and but a single well—peaceful looking enough, and by these fences certified in a measure, to be peaceably disposed. Nor am I able to say that they were otherwise; but their character is, as of a great many others in the region we are entering, that they shelter and pass on plundered goods. I have a list of them. The hedges by which some of them are secured, are of remarkable construction, very effectually concealing, as they do, the refuge they yield and the habitations within them. By the ordinary traveller they are scarcely distinguishable from the usual irregular surface of the ground; but that which seemed to him to be but a part of the sandy tract he was journeying over, on entering he suddenly beholds to be a stronghold in

Robber
Kôtes or
Thorn-
fenced
Villages.

these cormorants: "Some months ago a Bunnia bringing grain to Malwa, secreted a box of jewellery in one of the grain bags. Seemingly it became known, most probably through the connivance of one of his servants, for the train was plundered, although accompanied by the *Lôhsna Bulawa*, or village escort. The Thakoor was applied to, and after some apparent exertion, he produced everything that was taken *except the box of jewellery*, which by a curious coincidence was not to be found."

Memo.—The "Robbers' Rights" or blackmail (*Rekvoáli*.) are levied in the following proportion, half per cent. to two per cent. on bullion and specie. If a *Bulawa* is present with the convoy, the Thakoor, in whose employment he is, is bound in honour to make good the loss. A Thakoor who declined to pay this compensation on an occasion in *Shekawátie*, was deserted—his safe-conduct was shunned—and he lost the advantages accruing from the levy.

a masked position, protected with ramparts formed of bushes of thorn, with sand so beaten into them, as to present a consolidated mass of sufficient altitude to cover all within them, and enclosing an interior space, within the twists and turnings created by the irregularly placed huts in which, each hut too, separately fenced in with its own bristling screen, plunder could be stowed away, and, by the unpractised stranger, not easily be detected. These retreats are called *Kôtes*, and capable as they are of presenting obstinate resistance, as well as from their position in the heart of sandy wilds, they afford a sure refuge to marauders.

The
Nawáb.

The Nawáb paid me a visit in the course of the day, which I returned in the afternoon at his little palace. The reception was in an open arcaded terrace looking out upon a garden broken up into varying forms of beds, which, although containing at this advanced season, but few plants in flower, were pleasant to rest the eye upon from the gaze upon the wider expanse of nothing else than sand and sand hills that stretched beyond and all round the inviting spot. The Nawáb was a tall and courtly old gentleman, but feeble from ill health. His family reside in Delhi, where he has a *Kôthi* or mansion. He told me he was in the city during the siege of Delhi in the Mutiny, and had several secret communications at its commencement with the besieging Commander, Sir Harry Barnard (my cousin,) to whom by *flying kites* made of red paper, over the quarter where the mutineers had their powder manufactories, he indicated, he told me,

Incident
of the
Siege of
Delhi.

where to direct the fire of shells, a course which was, he declared, followed with success. He took an active part in his youth, he added, accompanied by some retainers, in the siege and capture by storm of *Bhurt-pore* by Lord Combermere, and was wounded on the occasion, and of this service he possessed testimonials.

Bhurt-pore was surrounded with a deep wet ditch which was infested, it was said, by *muggurs* or alligators, and when Lord Lake failed in 1806 to reduce that stronghold, it was given out, I here learn, by the besieged, as an old prophecy, that Bhurt-pore could only be taken by a *crocodile or alligator*. The coincidence was singular that *Combermere* (which bears the sense of a lake or tank tenanted by alligators,) should convey that signification and have been so translatable.⁵

Prophecy
regarding
Bhurt-
pore.

The Nawáb complained a good deal of the

⁵ P.S. 1891.—In the debate at the India House on Thanks to the Army of Bhurt-pore, *Dr. Gilchrist* the celebrated Oriental Professor, and at that period one of the body of proprietors, remarked, I find, on this subject: "It was singular after the time given to the inhabitants of Bhurt-pore to prepare for their defence, that they did not make a more formidable resistance; but the fact was, an old prophecy operated in our favour. That prophecy was, that Bhurt-pore could never be taken until all the water in its ditch was swallowed up by an alligator. Now the natives pronounced the name of Lord Combermere *Cáum-meer*, which in their language was 'alligator,' and they considered his Lordship turning off the water of the ditch, a fulfilment of the prophecy." The learned doctor would, I think, have more correctly certified that the name at once comprehended both the alligator (*combère*,) and its habitation the *mere*, or spacious "ditch" by which the fortification was surrounded. The word *mere* (convertible to *nér* or *neer*,) denotes any enclosed space of water, and is often an affix to places where such exists, as *Jesulmere*, *Ajmere*, *Bikaner*, etc.

robbers of Shekawátie. Lohároo, his estate, is one of three Jaghire possessions situated in the Delhi territory. These estates are under their own laws, the lords of the manors exercising jurisdiction within them as Jaghiredar magistrates, and are held under conditions of fidelity to the paramount power.

20th February, Soorujghur, 9 miles.—Through *Pilóde* and *Kásnee*, midway between which two places, we passed from *Lohároo* into *Shekawátie*. Many tales by the way of the excesses committed by *Soleidæ* and *Meena* freebooters, who from *Shekawátie* sally into the neighbouring districts and plunder indiscriminately; and that although often traced right back into the province, their *Khôj* or footmarks are always ignored by the village authorities, who too are declared to harbour them. A Thakoor lives at Soorujghur who has a fine palace within a fort built of mud walls. The stronghold is surrounded by a deep and difficult dry ditch. I visited him by invitation in his abode. He and a younger brother were a pair of unlicked cubs—both awkward boors with a surrounding of villainous-looking fellows of sorts—who seemed ready for strife of any kind. The town is a large one and contains some large houses. Some *Chetries* too, those gracefully constructed weeping monuments of barbarism, adorn the place.

Sooleidæ. The Sooleidæ of Shekawátie are descended from a branch of the family (called “Sheikjee,”) to which the territory originally belonged, and they became a community of robbers and freebooters

from the confusion and impoverishment consequent on successive subdivisions of their estates; arising from the system mentioned before, of co-heritage irrespective of primogeniture (*v. p.* 232.) Too proud to labour and too poor to live by honest means, and permanently left to their own devices from the weakness or the timidity of the suzerain power (Jeypore,) to coerce or to restrain them, *and abandoned by ourselves*, they have long taken to the road, to which the many traditions of the successful forays of their people, and the example afforded last year by kindred spirits in neighbouring territory, the *Bidáwuts* of the Bikaneer border, and the *Jódhas* of Marwar, had readily inclined them; typical of which and of this evil influence, I note the following:—The former of these two implacable factions, derive their name from being sprung from *Beeda Sing*, brother of *Bika*, founder of Bikaneer, and they form the most powerful of the people of Bikaneer. There existed a blood feud between them and the *Jódhas*, or men of Márwár, composing the opposite faction, arising from the murder by one of the latter clansmen, of a *Bidáwut* named *Mooljee*. They broke into open violence against, not only each other on set occasions, but in promiscuous acts of open plunder, charging them to each other. Thus last year two *Bidáwut* leaders, named *Deepjee* and *Kurrunjee*, collected a mixed band composed of plundering *Meenas*, *Shekáduts*, *Bidáwuts*, and some local *Rahtores*, adverse to their kinsmen the *Jódhas*, and with it proceeded on a marauding expedition, mounted on camels

Blood
Feud
between
Bidáwuts
and
Jódhas.

and horses. A large *Kuttár* or *káfila* of camels, laden with corn, sugar, and other commodities, was journeying from *Bhewánie* to *Pálee*. When arrived on the border, the convoy was waylaid by these plunderers at an early hour of the morning, near a village called *Bagsoora* near *Soojánghur*, and plundered not only of the corn and wheat, etc., but of money amounting to nearly 9000 rupees, several men being killed and wounded, and the camels appropriated. And of a similar case, exemplified as another instance of the lawless condition of these tracts, Blair reported : “A case in point has just occurred. A train of some 120 laden camels was proceeding from *Bhewánee* to *Pálee* without a ‘*Buláwa*’ (the constituted village guide and escort.) It was permitted to pass through *Bikaneer* territory undisturbed, but as soon as it reached the border of *Marwar*, down swept a body of mounted marauders and carried off nearly the whole. It so happens that in the vicinity of the occurrence, the *Bedáwuts* of *Bikaneer* and the *Jódhas* of *Márwár* are at feud, and each will tax the other of being the offenders, and it is more than likely the parties from both sides have shared the spoil.”

Dacoity

by

Môghyas

at Arnee.

We have to-day, information of another serious dacoity, attended with killing and wounding, of occurrence on the 15th instant, at *Arnee* of *Chittoreghur* in *Meywar*, the deed of a mixed gang of mounted and foot robbers—on treasure under a strong convoy from *Mundisore*. From the locality in proximity with the region infested by *Môghyas* (*vide* p. 278,) we take it to be the deed

of that tribe, the class I am so desirous to resume operations against (*vide* pp. 165 and 278.)—I await further information as to the circumstances of the present affair.

21st February, *Buktáwurpoora*, 12 miles: to accomplish which distance it took us five and a half hours. Directly on leaving *Soorujghur*, the country seemed suddenly to emerge out of the sand hills, and to be plain and open, and covered more with trees, mostly the *Khejree*; but the way was still heavy. A range of rocky hills to the eastward, defines the boundary between *Shekawátie* and the little principality or chieftainship of *Tóurwuttee*. The same tale as I came along, of the misdeeds of dacoits, and some of their recent exploits were narrated to me. The territory, parcelled out as it is among a lot of unprincipled *Thakoors*, has been a prey to the lawless ever since the removal of *Forster's* famous "*Shekawátie Brigade*." The original *Soolleidæ* villages were *Kherôré*, *Jákull*, *Moondwáree*, and *Nünglee*, but the descendants of the founder of the province, *Soolleidæ Sing*,* multiplied so numerously, that the many patrimonies into which their respective possessions were successively subdivided by the system already noticed of equal division among the surviving sons, ended by their becoming insufficient for their subsistence, so that all took to robbery as the only honourable means for maintaining themselves. Some certainly are in service, and *Nünglee* may be some exception as an entire den of robbers; but the people of the other places are not so nice; they are wholly

* P.S.—
Sheik
Boorhán,
a saint
whose
much-
visited
shrine is
near
Achrôle
in the
province,
had pro-
phesied
the birth
of a son
to Mokul,
the child-
less chief
local
Thakoor
or Baron;
on fulfil-
ment
whereof,
the boy
was
named
Shekjee
after the
holy man,
and from
him
sprang, as
said to
have been
foretold
by the
latter, the
race of
*Sheká-
wuts*.
Mokul
was the
grandson
of a
younger
son of the
Ruler of
Jypore
territory.

Forster's
Sheka-
wátie
Brigade.

robbers, associated with *Meenas*, *Bowries*, and other predatory persons whom they retain for the purpose. The removal of the special Shekawátie field force, was always deprecated. My predecessor predicted that the gangs kept under by the brigade, would be found very troublesome if it were removed or rendered less efficient. *It was withdrawn at a stroke*, on the score, I believe, of economy, and the men composing it drafted into what has long since been known as the Shekawátie battalion, which, at a later period took position and was numbered among the regiments of the line of the Bengal Infantry as the 13th Native Infantry, a fine corps and faithful during the dark days of the Mutiny, but lost in usefulness to the peace of the country for which the body had originally been specially created. The name even of "Forster," the well-selected commander of the force, used to inspire a terror that awed the bandits into peaceful pursuits, or at least into a desistance from open crime.

The route taken this morning, was of a zig-zag nature, deviating from one into another territory, and keeping near the track usually taken by camel trains. Thus we passed through *Seedloo*; then by a couple of *Dhánees* or hamlets; then came to *Choorroo* of Bikaner, the scene of the feat of arms a time back described (p. 233;) and after that to *Ojta* and *Gôtra*, bristling with thorn and of aspect forbidding.

22nd February, *Jhoonjoonoo*, twelve miles.—
Walked for the two first hours of the way,

accompanied by the Zumindár of the last place. He is by caste a *Ját*, and his village was founded by his father, *Bukhta*, and named after him. His own name, too, is *Bukhta*, for he wishes to preserve it as a patronymic. At about half way we passed through a *Tál* or depression, which, curiously, the sand did not invade, and we then crossed the broad sand-laid bed of the river *Kátlee*, to the site of a town called *Khoodána*, which had been gradually destroyed by the river when swollen during the rains. The ruins of a well in the dry bed of the stream, were said to have stood in the very middle of the effaced town. A broken-down fort of substantial masonry, standing on the high bank of the river, and an ancient *Chetrie* further back, were the only other vestiges of the once extensive place. *Bukhta* said he was born there, pointing to a spot about the middle of the river-bed, where he said his home had stood. Washed out of their homes, the inhabitants sought another place, and there, under his father's headship, built the new abode. Further on we came to *Bágur*, a large town inhabited by a race of *Putháns*, descended from a band of Afghans who had settled in that neighbourhood, and from whom sprung, it was said, the present Kaimkháni race before alluded to (p. 113.) *Bágur* is situated at the foot of two rocky hills belonging to the same range which I have said, runs through *Shekawátie* at intervals, and here is lost in the sand hills of *Bikaneer* territory, distant only a few miles S.W. from this point (*vide* pp. 160 and 274.)

Washed
away
Town.

Prevailing
Fear
of the
Dacoit
Bands.

Our way next lay through a wooded Tál or basin, and then it pierced a deep sand track before finally reaching *Jhoonjoonoo*, where now we have another clump of the same boulder hills. Bukhta, the venerable Chowdree of Bukhtáwurpoor, told me how his village had been plundered a few months back by Bidáwuts, joined by some *Sooleidæ*s, and his son, brother's wife and child, with several camels and a deal of property, carried off, and he described the miserable fear which pervaded the land. On arrival at *Jhoonjoonoo* too, a man rushed up to me with a complaint of the plunder of his goods close by, but two days previously; and another of the robbery from him of fifteen camels. Here is Bukhta's story: "We were all out reaping, when suddenly there was a cry of a raid upon our village. The few *bunya*'s shops were plundered at once, and my son carried off, and the wife also and child of my absent brother. We pursued. The child had been thrown down by the way; but it was some time before I could recover my brother's wife and my son and camels, and I only eventually did so through the assistance rendered by some Bikaner horsemen." The raid was one of the excesses during the recent feud between the *Jôdhas* and the *Bidáwuts*, the existence of which was a signal for greater activity among the local plunderers (*vide* p. 287.)—Was visited during the day by the Názim or Governor of the territory, and, accompanied by him, rode through the narrow streets of the ill-conditioned town.

Jhoonjoonoo.

23rd February, *Jhoonjoonoo*, Halt.—My people need

this rest, although by it we lose the full moonlight nights. My camp is pitched by the site of the old artillery lines of "Forster's Brigade," and my Nujjees and some local *chowkeedárs* (watchmen,) paced round about it during the night. A body of *Nágás*, in the service of the Jeypore State, is hutted close by.—Jhoonjoonoo was formerly a possession of the *Kaimkhánees*, the semi-converted race before alluded to (pp. 113 and 291.) They still inhabit it, both as cultivators and camelmen; but many among them are dacoits. Some detectives, whom I had detached from Bikaner, rejoined me here to-day with a Kaimkhánee approver named *Jeewun Khan*,* arrested last year, whom his quondam associates will be surprised to see as *one of us*! The ousted Kaimkhánees gave place to the Thakoors. For the five sons of the intrepid chieftian who wrested the region from that people, five fortalices were erected within the body of the place, one for each, within which they separately resided with their families, independently of each other on their succession to the acquired territory. Their descendants have, from the custom of constant subdivision of the inheritance, dwindled down into mere petty lordlings, and, from consequent impoverishment, have become so many swash-bucklers: but the forts are still, more or less, in the same wayward occupation. These strongholds are of tall masonry walls and towers; but are not in good repair.

I receive running accounts of the state of the country round about. A Brahmin named *Doonga*,^{Daily open} declared to me to-day, that yesterday evening as Plunder.

* v. pp. 182
and 245.

he was travelling in this direction on his way to *Khétree* from *Rámghur*, accompanied by his brother *Jaisa*, their cook or *Rosôya*, and the driver of their camel, they were assaulted at a spot near *Nándgaum* by six armed men mounted upon three camels, one of whom had a double-barrelled percussion gun. They robbed the party of everything, and carried off their camel also.

Bunja Ját of *Bubeya*, near *Choorroo* of *Bikaneer*, complained, that as he was proceeding towards his village about two months ago, with some ten camels laden with forage collected in the jungle, he was set upon at about four o'clock of the afternoon, by a numerous gang of persons mounted upon camels, and headed, he believed, by one *Jeewunjee* of *Dandoo*, an outlawed rebel. They drove off his camels, and deprived himself and his people of some gold earrings, of their blankets, and indeed of all they possessed. A *Būnya*, who happened to be going in the same direction, was also plundered by them. The *Khôj* was carried to *Kherôre*, the *Soolleidæ* village near *Moondwáree*.

Young
Burton.

Capper writes from Lucknow, recommending his police assistant, *Mr. J. Burton*, to notice, for employment in our special police, as zealous and hard-working, of whom he adds : "He has shown considerable detective ability—has hunted up his father's murderer ; also some of those who killed our officers at *Chitramow*, and some other *Matineers* who were 'wanted.'" Major Burton, the young man's father alluded to, was Political

Agent of *Kôtah* in Rajpootanah when the Mutiny broke out, and was killed by the rebels at *Awâh* while gallantly defending himself and his family. Capper was one of the besieged in the *Lucknow Residency*. A shell from a mutineer battery threw down a building in which he happened to be, and he was buried alive in the ruins, but was happily dug out (*vide* Journal of 1859, when I first met him.)

24th February, Sunday, *Jhoonjoonoo*; halt.—My
Some of my camelmén have gone off into ^{Baggage}
Bikaneer territory with eleven of my hired camels. ^{Camels}
I cannot suppose they have done so to appropriate ^{disappear.}
them, but rather that being sub-contractors under the headman with whom the agreement for the whole number of camels was made, they have fallen out with him, and in dudgeon have left him; for he takes the matter easily, and says he will replace the deficiency as bound by his engagement to do; but the quarrel is inconvenient. This being the Hindu marriage month, and that too, in which the *Hooli* festival, now in full career, ends, singing and the noise of merry-making in the town, feasting and the orgies attendant on the great national holiday, the sound of instruments and the din and larum accompanying *Bairât* or processions of marriage, continued throughout the day, and at night were incessant, making the never absent village dogs, join in with the general hubbub by barking throughout it.

At evening I ascended one of the rocky ^{A Local}
eminences, and mounted up to a *Byrágee's mhut* or ^{Ascetic.}

tenement, erected nearly at the very top of it among several overhanging rocks, and reached only by a long parapeted causeway, all substantially constructed of solid masonry, but not yet completed. The ascetic in possession, was in the usual nude condition, four square inches of rag forming his entire personal apparel. His body was covered with ashes, his head folded round and round with his own braided hair like a tall tiara, and his face and forehead plastered with white symbolic daubs. Sleek he was, and in good condition withal—not at all a *starving* mendicant, whatever his penances : and he had a fat pony too, in a well-littered shed close by his own comfortable den, to get up to and scramble into which must cause the good little beast some trouble. I asked the man why thus disfigure himself ? I was rebuked for the impertinence by no reply, as, silently beholding me, he squatted on his upraised hams on the stone-built terrace of the lofty spot. Not abashed, and to draw him out, I next inquired to what end a red painted stone set up in a nook up there among the rocks and fantastically dressed up ? He answered : “ You, *Sahib Lôgue*, act in like manner : you worship your *Girjaghur* ” (church.) I said we venerated our church as the house of God, and where we offered prayers. He exclaimed, “ Not so : not only do you worship the edifice, but you fall down and kneel in it to a golden sun.” I said he was misinformed—but he insisted upon it, as though he had been in some church and had beheld it—adding, “ We do not worship that stone, but we

‘venerate’ it, as reminding us of the Omnipresence.” I supposed he had been into a church, and had beheld the congregation kneeling *visibly* to nothing; or pointed to some gold embroidered *coroña* surrounding the sacred monogram in some altar covering, or pulpit cloth. He had, like most of his kind throughout India, wandered to many distant regions and sacred spots, famed from olden times, as places to be visited, whatever the difficulties of the pilgrimage. Actual dangers to wayfarers in such garb, so greatly respected if not superstitiously apprehended as these sects generally are, and on such pious purposes intent, I believe to be none, their supposed holiness ensuring their security; but the privations endured by them are certainly many, the journeyings necessarily continuous and painful, and the vicissitudes of climate extreme. He had thus performed ablutions at that “holy of holies” *Hurdwár*, where the Ganges cleaves its way and first bursts in upon the plains of Hindostan; and from there had penetrated to the sacred pools of *Gungôtri*, perched up in the far white-clothed mountains, near where the cold waters of the great river issued, he said, through the revered “*Gao-Mookh*,” or imagined “cow’s mouth,” after their trickling descent from the snow fields of the stupendous regions beyond it, to where further approach was inaccessible; ⁶

His Pilgrimages.

⁶ P.S.—“Ah! who can wonder that the holy Seer
Should fix the dwelling of the Godhead here;
Where from the stately mountain’s snowy side
The Ganges rolls its clear majestic tide,

and thence, *longo intervallo*, to the holy fane of *Baidynáth*, low down in *Beerbhoom* of Bengal, and there had circumambulated that courted idol, and devoutly poured upon it of the unpolluted element, filled by himself at the sources he had but now brought it from, of *Gunga-Má*, or "our Mother Ganges," as he reverently apostrophized that wondrous water-way: he had ascended also to the boiling springs of *Jūmnôtri*, up among bewildering granite heights, where the waters of the "sun-born" *Jumna* begin to flow, hastening to meet the mighty *Gunga* in her downward course in the plains below; and had worshipped, too, at the luminous shrine of *Jwálá-Mookhee*, the flame-faced goddess *Párwuttee*, situated in the Punjab: nor had he omitted homage to the Hindoo *Phallus*, in the imposing temple reared to that object of worship at remote *Ramisseram*, where the monkey-faced god and warrior *Hunoomán*, successfully had crossed his army over into that *Ultima* Thule*, "Lunka" or Ceylon, for the punishment and extermination of fierce insatiable *Ráwun*, the Brahmin-devouring demon who ruled there: nor

And through far distant regions shapes its course,
 With godlike bounty, and with giant force;
 Whilst all around us, in the varying scene,
 The glorious attributes of God are seen,
 The mountain, fertile vale, the stream, the grove,
 Speaking his high majesty, his care, his love."

(*Lines written by a lady in an album at Hurdwár.*)

* P.S.—Although "Lunka" of Hindoo mythology is popularly believed to be identical with *Seilán* or Ceylon, and to which the geographical position ascribed to it in the *Shástras*, lends further credence, it is nevertheless stated by some pundits and

yet at *Dwárka*, in extreme Guzerat, to have his arms stamped and seared with the sacred heated iron, engraved with the *shell, ring and lotus flower*, mystic emblems of the god, in the temple of *Runchôrjee* incarnate of *Krishna*; or yet to perform *dūrshūn and dūndwūt* or worship, at the shrine in the same neighbourhood, of heaven-descended *Sômnauth*, from destroying whose idol, concealed in the corpulence of which were priceless gems and untold treasures, the Brahmin priests in vain had endeavoured to dissuade the image-breaking invader *Sultán Mahmood*, the same conqueror who is said to have carried off those riches, and with them conveyed the famed *sandal-wood gates* of that temple to his capital at *Ghuzni*, where they lay till brought away in triumph by British troops six hundred years subsequently, and deposited at *Agra*, the city of the great *Akhabár*, where they now as uselessly lie, and where this man had beheld them.⁶ The wandering *Byrágee* had also been to the recesses of *Oomurkuntüc* in the country of the wild *Ghônnds* in the Central Provinces, where to pray and to bathe at the sources of the holy *Nerbudda*, and had viewed its great cascade grandly precipitating

bards, to mean *Ethiopia*, declared by tradition to have been successfully invaded from India in the time of the deified hero and sovereign *Krishna*.

⁶ P.S.—All this has been confuted. Certainly the gates brought away by Pollock's avenging army from *Ghuzni*, were conveyed to and deposited in the Fortress of *Agra*, for I have seen them there; but no *gates* were carried away from *Somnâth*. What *Mahmood* took from there and cast before the door of his mosque at *Ghuzni*, were some fragments of the emblem of the Phallic worship for which so many pilgrims resorted to that celebrated Hindoo fane, and which he had caused to be destroyed.

from the tableland where the river sprang, into the jungles and the region below it. He had wandered also to "*Káli-Koti*" or *Calcutta*, where was the shrine of the destroying *Káli*, the sable goddess and tutelary deity of Thugs and other miscreants to the present day; and even to *Mômbai* or *Bombay*, "that other place of you *Sahib lôgue*," from where he would have taken ship to *Mekrán*, and thus have included *Hengláj* also among his pilgrimages, and have prostrated himself before the grim and appalling fire goddess there set up and imaged in all her gruesomeness, but had failed to do so through dread of the miseries of the sea, and the direr personal pollution from crossing *Kára-páni* or the great "salt waters."⁹ He had indeed, been a mighty traveller

⁹ P.S.—The intrepid and unwearied Byragee did not say why, while shrinking from embarking on shipboard, he did not adopt the *land route* to Kedge-Mukrán, usually followed by other pilgrims, over by Cutch and Luckput-bunder, and thence by the way of Lower Scinde; or include in the alternative among his toilsome wanderings, the other nearer and more accessible *Hengláj* in *Kôtah* territory, in Rajpootanah, in the neighbourhood whereof, situate in one of the romantic glens thereabout abounding, is the famous *Koondh* or fountain dedicated to the *snake king*, fit twin, we might suppose, or consort and representative, of the *fire goddess* whose shrine he had failed to visit. *Hengláj*, the journey this *Palmer* had desired to accomplish, a place of great resort by Hindoo pilgrims, is situated beyond Somneeani in the Lus country (Kedje-Mukrán,) and when I was Assistant Political-Agent in Cutch (1843,) I was to have accompanied the Rao of Cutch in his meditated *Teeruth* (pilgrimage,) to that renowned shrine. He proposed going there by the land route, attended by a large body of armed retainers, including his Arab mercenaries, in the event of collision with the Scindians. But His Highness was persuaded against the risks of the undertaking, and I was deputed to the Thurr instead, where to destroy the guns and mortars in the fortresses along the frontier of the then recently dispossessed

and persistent pilgrim, this nude, besmeared gymnosophist, of small wants and great energy, and the naked hermit became quite attractive, rapt, as he was however unclothed and unbeauteous, as he narrated his "painful marchings" and the wondrous sights he had beheld and bowed down to. Other equally devoted and fanatic individuals, leading, like this man, eremetical lives in caves and hovels in wild and infrequented spots and inaccessible places on crags or rocky eminences by side of river or sea, or on temple-topped hill or difficult mountain peak, held sacred as the abode of their *Devi* and not to be profaned, may be met with, as I have met them, where least expected; but few so observant or so communicative and friendly,

Ameers of Scinde, and to convey away the metal thereof across the desert of the Runn of Cutch, from which to assist in the construction of the triumphal monument erected at Calcutta, under the orders of Lord Ellenborough, from the ordnance of the captured country, in commemoration of the conquest of Scinde. Attached to me in this no easy task, was Lieutenant Cameron of the Bombay Artillery, accompanied by a small band of Native Artillerymen, hammersmiths and other artificers, with whose aid to blow up, or beat into carriageable size, the very large, and, in some instances, immense cannon of sorts we were to bring away, but it was successfully accomplished. The armaments were of the heaviest description; and the larger mortars, which defied bursting with powder on account of their vast calibre, we could only reduce by instant and sharp hammering when brought to white heat in furnaces of dried cow and camel-dung fuel. The broken-up metal was conveyed across the desert to the sea coast, for transshipment to Bombay and Calcutta, by a long train of camels, which, too, we had to organize. I had passed for the Engineers at Addiscombe, and declined appointment to the Artillery; and, the numerous supernumeraries in the Engineer service not admitting of my nomination to it, I had come out in the Infantry with an Engineer's certificate. Cameron died early.

Jogees in
General.

as this lone man proved to be. They are a strange people, are these religious devotees, pretended or real. There are several classes of them among Hindoos, as *Jogees*, *Byrágees*, *Agūnhôtrees*, *Sūnyásees*, etc., many of whom are, I am sorry to think after so much present entertainment, incorrigible rogues; and, when travelling in companies, they present bands of stalwart naked fellows, strong limbed and sturdy, who will want what they affect to want not, and soon, too will *possess themselves thereof*, despite their worshipful presence and their odour of sanctity, and are an unpleasant lot to meet abroad, or to be in the neighbourhood of! They are a very independent community. No sooner does a party of the slate-coloured naked folk, arrive to rest under some *peepul* tree, or other convenient spot near water, than two or more of their number sally into the neighbouring village with their black alms bowls, there peremptorily to demand contributions in money or in kind, always readily yielded, while the rest take to cooking food from the contents of their already well-stored saffron-coloured wallets, or stretch themselves to slumber till their foragers return with fresh supplies, seldom refused, through fear, as I have said, of their minatory denunciations. There is no whining or fawning on their parts, as is the habit of ordinary local *Mángtás* or beggars of towns and cities; for with this people, *demand forthwith creates supply*—and this, too, independently of what they may have already *acquired* in the open by the way; and then soon onwards all go,

refreshed and exulting, with their one or two small baggage ponies, their headman or *Munth* perhaps bestriding one of them. Many are their devices when abroad evil-doing; and here I confine the remark to those who are *not* what they seem to be. Thugs, poisoners, and kidnappers are to be found among *Jogees* oftener—of the exploits of some of whom some examples have been given (*vide* p. 127.) When visiting *Dwárka* many years ago, I was loudly cursed by a *Byrágee*, for not readily enough yielding to his demand for alms, and as I put off from the shore, to give point to his execrations the angered fellow, stark and grey, seemed a very blue devil, as, standing to his full height and with both arms stretched upwards, he flung dust into the air while uttering his direst maledictions. My boatmen were awed.

A Swear-
ing
Byrágee.

Descending from this eyry-like hermitage, and leaving its remarkable occupant, I passed round the back of the town on to another rocky range, situated in a gorge of which was a fine Mahomedan structure enclosing the tomb and shrine of a *Pir*, named *Kümmüroodeen*, who lived and had lately died in *Jhoonjoono*. The building was not yet completed, the different portions of it having been undertaken independently by different parties at their own expense, who have taken their own time in going on with them. One of these persons was a *Rissaldár*, recently deceased, who had belonged to one of the corps of the Hyderabad Irregular Cavalry (*Nizám's*.) His portion of the work was well executed, and was

Pir's
Tomb.

coated with polished *shell* stucco as white as snow, and embellished with richly-coloured decorations. Over the entrance into the square containing the Saint's Tomb, covered by a cupola, was a succession of Saracenic galleries, one above the other, running round a common open centre, and surmounted by a fine terrace similarly polished. Portions of the edifice were curiously intermixed with stooping arches projecting over the windows and other apertures, such as are usual in *Hindoo* buildings and especially in the palaces of Rajpootanah, symbolizing thereby in a manner, the similar admixture of Hindoo with the rites and ceremonies of Mahomedanism, as preserved by the proselytized *Kaim-Khánees*, the principal worshippers at this shrine. I have noticed before that several of the tribes inhabiting this side of Rajpootanah, such as the *Kaim-Khánees*, *Rángurs*, *Ráees*, etc. (v. pp. 245 and 254,) were converts to Islam, and singularly preserved many Hindoo customs in their new religion. A set of apartments ranged at the back of a face of the centre square, comprised cooking places and guest-rooms, showing that the *Moojáwir* or "Levite" in charge of the precincts (who also, indeed, superintends the works,) was not unmindful of the creature comforts, reasonably enough and admissibly claimable by those electing to abide in so secluded a spot; and to judge from the preparations that were going on in those compartments, where several huge platters filled with flour and other provisions were arrayed, seemed to be expecting much company to-night.)

Half-con-
verted
Kaim-
Khánees.

Priestly
care
taken.

and to be a faithful representative of good old *Friar Tuck*. They showed also that the larder was liberally supplied, and the shrine munificently endowed. A handsome well, constructed at the spot in his lifetime by the entombed patron saint, was enclosed within the structure.

There seems to be a tenacity—an unrelinquished ^{Jhoon-joonoo.} hope of a return to prosperous times about *Jhoon-joonoo*, inconsistent with its neglected aspect, there being several unfinished buildings in it, some of palatial pretensions, all left, as it were, to be completed at some future convenience, or more or less under construction; while *Bunyas* and other residents, Hindoos and *Kaim Khánees*, to the latter of whom the territory formerly belonged (*vide* p. 293,) continue to erect new places, or to add to their present abodes. This incentive to build was probably acquired by the example set during the presence here of the once famous “*Shekawátie Brigade*,” when the place flourished, and there was security to life and property; but alas! the ruins of the bungalows of ^{Forster's Shekawátie Brigade.} *Major Forster* the Commander of the Force, and his sons, curiously inwrought with several *Chetries*, those beautiful cupolas so often before described; the deserted *seráe*, bazaar or market place, and mosque, constructed by them; the Horse, Infantry and Artillery lines of the departed brigade, wells choked or in a ruinous state, and gardens upturned, hedges of thorn packed in and among them all, and rippled sand heaped up everywhere, too surely indicate that whatever the in-

centive of those days, the glory of the town had passed away, the place left in neglect to recover if it may, the vigour with which it had been inspired, and the country once more a prey to the lawless bands who now roam over it unchecked. "There used to be no Dakoities in those days, but now they are of daily occurrence," and the dread of the robbers of Shekawátie is felt throughout the surrounding region. In vain are the offenders traced by our own or other police into their sandy wilds; for so far from any assistance being given, their arrest is everywhere resisted, and every remonstrance met by the local authorities, or by the rulers of the territory, with recriminations of the insolence or the violence of the pursuers.

Colonel
Forster.

(The following interpolated account is let in here at a *post scriptum* date :)—Colonel Forster was a local officer of colour, sprung from an alliance which was not unusual in the days of his birth. He was some time adjutant of "Skinner's Horse," but falling out with Colonel Skinner, he obtained employment in *Shekawátie*, and, at the time he first came into notice, was in some sort an uncovenanted *soldier-magistrate* with a semi-military following in that territory, which, being in a very wild condition, the region desert and inhospitable, and our own available troops and officers infrequent in Rajpootanah, the several local forces, since specially raised, not being then in existence, he was permitted by Government to raise an irregular force to keep the district down. With

this force he did good service. He served in the Mahratta and Pindarie Campaigns, and under Sir John Malcolm in Dhár and Jubbooa, districts in Malýa inhabited chiefly by Bheels and other wild tribes, and at that period possessed by some Arab and *Mékráni* insurgents, headed by their "Jemadars" and by rebellious mercenaries (*Patáns* and *Mewátees*,) in the service of Scindia—who all were expelled, and the country restored to order. In Shekawátie he acted from time to time against various parties of insurgents and banded robbers, as at *Seekur*, *Goodhee*, *Khétree*; and in an assault on *Kalook* in December, 1840, he was severely wounded. From the nucleus he had raised, he gradually worked up his irregulars into a *brigade*, composed of Infantry, Cavalry and Guns; and having been found so useful, he was even permitted, on his own proposition, to join on his brigade to the Forces employed in the Sutlej Campaign, and with it did excellent service, at an opportune juncture, at the battle of *Aliwál*. As so much the practice in those days on the part of officers at the head of "Irregulars," he had put his men into superb uniforms, his Cavalry especially being dressed more like European dragoons than native horsemen. The Sikhs at Aliwál mistook, indeed, his cavalry for English Dragoons, and fled before it. Some prisoners declared after the battle, that had they not been so *taken in*, they would not have fallen back. For the Sutlej Campaign, Forster was made a Companion of the Bath. At a subsequent date his Brigade was, unfortunately,

Anecdote
of the
Battle of
Aliwál.

disbanded, and the Infantry portion of it, after being weeded of its rough elements, was converted into what was denominated "the Shekawátie Battalion," and drafted into the Bengal Army, under the command of one of his two sons, and stationed at Sumbulpore, the capital of a district bordering on Orissa, Colonel Forster himself being pensioned. (His son, *Captain William Robert Forster*, continued to command the Regiment till 1863 when the Staff Corps was formed, consequent on the reorganization following which the "Shekawátie Battalion" was, in token of its staunchness during the Mutiny, volunteering as the men had done for General Service, and of their good services, brought on the *Regular List*, and numbered as "the 13th (Shekawátie) Regiment Bengal Native Infantry" ¹ (*vide* p. 290.)

Inter-
viewed.

On my return to my tents, was waited upon by the Jhoonjoonoo *Punch*, or "local board" of *Bunyas* or traders. They represented the oppression experienced throughout Shekawátie from *Meena*, *Sooleidæ*, and other bands of plunderers: dacoitie on the highways by day, and robberies upon their houses at night, were of constant occurrence: there was no justice: they had often complained by written *Urzees* or petitions to the *Názim* or local governor, but had met with no redress: they earnestly desired something being devised for their safety: *this*

* ¹ P.S.—I am indebted for this information respecting Major Forster, to Colonel Thomas Taylor, who was in the Shekawátie Regiment for some years, and latterly commanded it.

could only be effected by *Sahibs* (British officers:) "what is brought from fifty koss is plundered in five," or in other words, *what we toil for and bring up from Calcutta and other distant places, we are robbed of in our own country at our very doors*:—the plunderers appeared one morning at *Mákur*, five koss distant from here, and not only sacked one *Soojeram's* house, but carried off his wife and two children, whom he could only recover from the *Sooleidæs* of *Kherôre*, by consenting to a heavy ransom: this happened certainly one or two years ago, but robberies were still and nevertheless, of daily occurrence. "And only two or three months ago" (exclaimed one of the *Punch*,) "some robbers broke into the house of my brother here, *Rámkurn Shámi*, and plundered his property to the extent of 5000 rupees; the *Názim* did nothing."

Robber-
ridden
People.

The defected camels having been replaced, my camp moves on at nightfall.

25th February, *Bhirronda*, nine miles eastward.—We "set forward and pitched" here this morning. For now we have altered our course, and are traversing across *Shekawátie*. Heavy sand all the way—an extra pair of bullocks has been hired to help on my own now completely fatigued animals. The *Názim*, who is charged with the government of the Province, accompanied me out a little way, but as I always walk the first part of the march these worthies are glad to be dismissed soon. He seems a willing enough man, and he rendered us efficient service when employed in another

Captain
Nubbee
Bux
Khan.

Wanted
Dacoits in
the Case
of the
Cart
Robbery
near
Rhotuck.

capacity at Kurnál during the Mutiny, of which he possessed several high testimonials. For that service he was dubbed *Captain Nubbee Bux Khan*. He declared to me that he was powerless to effect any change in the lamentable state of things here ; that his only means consisted of a few ill-disciplined men, and that as the dacoits sometimes resisted and showed fight, they were afraid to be sent out against them. As I write a dacoitie has been committed but three miles from my camp ! A high wind and much sand all day, the air being darkened as if by a mist. At night the *Názim* rode in, bringing a man named *Joháhin Sing* in irons, whose arrest, long desired by our frontier police, I had asked him to effect for the highway robbery near Rhôtuck on some laden carts, already mentioned (p. 268.) Three men were " wanted " for that robbery, of whom we have traced another, *Nursia*, to custody at Jeypore, and the third, *Láka* (the latter's brother,) to somewhere about Soojánghur in Bikaner, to where I have just sent off some Bikaner detectives in pursuit of him.

Arrest of
some of
the
Bandits
who Mur-
dered our
Men.

Was glad to learn from Blair's office to-day, that some of the offenders (Bedowreahts,) concerned in the murder of our Nujjees and Approvers at the Chumbul, in the forest lying between *Kerowlie* and *Dholepore* last November (*vide* page 30,) have been arrested. It is now pretty certain that the leader of the gang on this occasion, and in the subsequent encounter in December, in which a Rissaldar in the service of the Rajah of Dholepore

and another of our Nujjees were killed, was one *Gujádhur Sing*, a notorious Bedowreah Thakoor, and an outlaw, with whom we shall have to square matters.

26th February, *Loeil*, eight miles.—Through deep sand and higher sand hills, the *Táls* or vales between them well covered with the *Khéjra*, all denuded just now of foliage by grazing camels. On leaving the last halting ground, the broad dry bed of the *Kátlee* had to be crossed, and a mile further on another branch of it at *Soláno*, where, and at *Boláno* beyond it, we again came upon barley and wheat fields, surrounded as before with impervious hedges of thorn and irrigated from deep wells. In case of any attempt to rescue, the new prisoner was in last night's march, handcuffed to an approver. Some horsemen, sent by the Rajah of *Khéttri*, joined my camp last night. There was apprehension as to the safety during the night march of our *Line-dôree*,"² as a camp retinue on the line of march is called; for in such sandy tracts and the intricacies occasioned by sand hills, and in hollows covered with low jungle, every facility is afforded for lying in wait and escaping pursuit.

Precau-
tions on
the
March.

I am everywhere met with complaints of excesses by robbers, and only yesterday two such acts were perpetrated in the open, almost in the

² *Line-dôree* (anglice *line-rope*,) is the native name given to the measuring cord or chain in use for castrametation purposes, or for laying down roads or field works, and is applied consequently to the baggage train conveying such appurtenances.

immediate neighbourhood of my camp. I inform Mr. Nasymth of the capture of the man wanted by his police. The *Názim* was prompt in effecting it, and it shows what can be done when insisted upon. The local native governors have not hitherto had a character for doing much in putting down plunderers, but rather the other way, "*point de zèle*" serving them in goodly stead from the robber leaders. The Maharajah of Jeypore declared that the evil was too deeply rooted to be easily eradicated—that whoever was sent to Shekawátie became tainted—they shielded the plunderers and winked at those who harboured them. But dacoits have never found a want of patrons among the local authorities. I write to Beynon, the Political Agent at Jeypore, apprising him also of the arrest of Joháhir Sing, and requesting the transfer to our custody of *Nursia*, that man's reputed accomplice. The British police had, I said, carried the *Khôj* of the plunderers of the carts, into Shekawátie, and it had there been declined under the interpretation wrongly given to the recent "modification" in the *Khôj* rules before alluded to (p. 268)—the offenders were known, and their arrest refused—and the Frontier British Commissioner naturally complained of this, and had sent up the case with a copy of the misunderstood rule, as supplied to him by the Inspector-General of the Punjab police (to whom I had sent it,) to the Lieutenant-Governor of the Province, "with a view to all being sent on to the Viceroy."

Here is something more from the neighbourhood : A dacoitie was committed four days ago by some *Meenas* on the highway between *Pátesir* and *Dhoondoo*, close upon the *Shekawátie* border, on a train of camels carrying piece goods.

Another, but a few hours ago, by six men mounted on three camels, at a place called *Hanásir*, but a few miles from my tents. The robbers had fire-arms. They carried off a camel-load of plunder.

Another man has just declared : " I was travelling from *Bhewánie* to *Kishengurh*, with a *Kuttár*, or string of camels, and I reached this place only last night. As my camels were out grazing on the bushes but a few miles off from here, two of them were but now driven away by a party of ten men, mounted on five camels."*

Truly this state of brigandage has become a chronic plague on this triple frontier, and no serious steps are taken to repress it !

27th February, *Khêtree*, 14 miles.—To get to *Khêtree*, the principal town of the small chieftainship of *Pátyn-Tuarwátie*, a fronting range of hills had to be penetrated and wound through. The strongly-posted town of *Jusrapore* blocked the gorge or entrance into them, and from there we had to thread, in a roundabout manner, a long and narrow ravine extending beyond it. Wheat and barley cultivation filled the entire space, which with umbrageous trees dotted about, were very pleasant to behold. We then defiled through a short rocky pass leading through a series of *cactus*-covered hills, and at length

Robbery
Far and
Near.

* We are
forcibly
reminded
by this
and the
occurrences
mentioned
on p. 262,
of the
similar
misfortunes
which be-
fell un-
happy Job
(vide
chap. i.
14—19.)

reached the capital of the kinglet. The Rajah rode out to meet me. He is a consumptive young man, of a studious bent of mind, much preoccupied with plans for the educational progress of the people of the little principality. He claims descent from the *Tuár* rulers of ancient Delhi.

I write to Coleridge, enclosing a translation of the misconstrued *Khôj* rule (*vide* p. 268,) and say that as I read it, it by no means implies that *Khôj* was *not* to be followed and insisted upon. I request him to assist the Bikaner detectives whom I had deputed to search out *Láka* (Nursia's brother,) the other accomplice in the *Rhôtuck* cart robbery, the information of him being, that he was one of those who took part in the recent *Bidáwut* raids, and that his family were on that occasion taken into custody by *Nármáljee*, the Maharajah's Dewán; also that the Thakoor of *Thirpálee* of Bikaner used to put him up when raiding in those parts. With these clues or *Khôj*, the fugitive may be traced. Write also to Blair on the subject of the recent revision, by Eden of the rules for pursuit and arrest in Rajpootanah, and the consequent refusal of *Khôj*, "the Hissár British authorities having complained of it." I request him to bring the misconstruction involved to Eden's notice, as that it could not be meant that *Khôj was to be refused!*

The
Khétris
Rajah.

I said to-day to the Khétris Rajah, after he had taken me over his palace, and discoursed about his meditated plans, that much as he did for the "educational progress" of his people, I feared he

effected little for the material prosperity of his territory, *infested as it was by Dacoits*. He conveyed me into his "library," which certainly contained a good selection of books, and there he pedantically explained to me how he was studying the "Medical Science!" At evening the young enthusiast sent me a *Zyáfut*, or tray of native meats, and *three bottles of good sherry*, and lent me the latest number of the *Friend of India* and the first volume of *Kaye's Sepoy War*. I urged him to turn his attention to the suppression of the professional plunderers so numerous sheltered in his districts, as a duty quite as essential to the security and welfare of his people, as the establishment of schools, in which he was so laudably engaged, was to their intellectual improvement. He promised much.

28th February, *Khukráya*, 11 miles.—To get into a cart track and avoid the entanglement of the hills, we had to retrogress three miles of the road we had come by, although by a shorter cut we could have got direct to *Nárnoul* by a saving of four or five miles. The country is more open, the obstructive hills now lying away to our right. *Singhána*, a large stone-built town, was to be seen embosomed on the slope of one of them. *Singhána* was a possession including several villages, that formerly belonged to the *Kaim-Khání* race. *Kunkáree*, an extensive walled town, lay in sight at the foot of a rocky crag of *kunkur* or limestone, and from which it must have acquired its name. •

I was a good deal taken by the young chief of

Khêtree, but the State is unquestionably mismanaged, and I note it with reluctance. The territory is included within "Shekawátie," and it will be necessary to bring the matter prominently under notice when considering any report upon the condition of the entire province. The rulers of *Khêtree* and of *Seekun*, a similar chiefship in the opposite direction of the same province, are first-class feudatories. Both are almost as independent of interference with their internal administration on the part of their Suzerain or feudal superior, the *Máharajah of Jeypore*, as the latter himself is in that respect of the British Government. *Seekur* from its situation, more in the interior of the province, lying as it does indeed within the black mail area before described (p. 281,) is inhabited by perhaps the most confirmed of the predatory races who overrun Shekawátie, and the successive chieftains of it would not seem to have arrived at any higher merit, although the Regent who manages the territory during the minority of the present chief, has a character for vigour. But so much has been said, and perhaps deservedly, of the *excellence* of the rule of the *Khêtree* lord, that it seems hard to have occasion to detract from it. His enlightened policy, the institution by him of courts of justice upon the British model, the introduction of a code of laws based upon our own, the inauguration of a land settlement, the establishment of schools, the award of scholarships and prizes, the formation of charitable dispensaries and a hospital, the construction of

roads, and the liquidation by a system of the closest economy of a considerable portion of the State debt, have distinguished his succession to the lordship, and justly secured for the young Ruler the favourable consideration of the British Government (*vide* page 10.) It is thought, too, that his police arrangements are effective. But Meena robbers abound throughout the State—it is their *locale*, and *Kote-Pootlee*, a tenure within it consisting of a circle of villages transferred to Khêtree by Lord Lake, is a very nest of Meenas, of whom there are 125 families in *Kote-Pootlee* itself, a very head centre of the confederacy, as *Shajanpoor*, not very distant further on in *British territory*, is of the same predatory tribe located round about there, *where, too, they are permitted to come and go without hindrance*; and it is no criterion of police efficiency, that they do not plunder where they reside, it being no indication of their desistance from crime that they do not commit it where they are located, it being a guarded principle with professional criminals generally, and with Meenas very particularly, *not to rob* where they are *suffered* to remain unmolested. I am sorry that with all the favourable aspect of the government of the territory there should be so many signs the other way. The ruler's bad health and frequent absences from his capital, may in some degree account for this, rather than that he premeditatedly countenanced it; but he is too much of a *dilettanti* to be in his right place at the head of a chiefship so peculiarly circumstanced

and so much requiring a strong hand over it.³

Mail
Rules.

Salar
Jung.

Mr. Yule writes in reply to my reference from Bikaner about the mail cart robbery rules (*vide* pp. 134 and 162,) that he himself wrote very strongly against them "as unwise in the highest degree," and that *Salar Jung* also remonstrated strongly against them. He truly remarks, "these little things cause more dislike to us some ways than great zoolum." I am thus not alone on the subject. *Salar Jung* was "in great grief" with his master the Nizam, "whose long-standing dislike to him had broken out with violence, and will not easily be brought to order." Mr. Yule also tells me of his appointment to the Governor-General's Council, and that he is about to leave Hyderabad to join it at Simlah. He adds, "I hope this will find you somewhere. Nobody knows where you are, though there is no such difficulty in telling where you have been."

Treasure
Dacoities
in Nimár.

We hear of a treasure dacoities at *Burwai*, down in Nimár. A valuable consignment of treasure in Austrian dollars and silver brick, had been sent by rail from Bombay, and on arrival at *Khundwah* was forwarded upon two carts for conveyance to Indore, but under no escort. The convoy was waylaid at night and plundered. The local police officer complains that as much as *thirty lacs of treasure* had lately been passed up under no guard, and that another consignment of *seventy-five thousand rupees*

³ P.S.—These remarks were subsequently embodied in an official Report on the state of the country.

was, when he wrote, about to be also taken on, the native agent or *Gomáshta*, with which, *declined to pay for a guard!* This apathy on the part of the senders of treasure, is attributable to the fact of ~~the~~ consignments *being insured*—it being no con- Causes.
cern to them if the *Bheemah-wallahs*, or insurers, suffered! The *Gomáshtas*, too, are probably under some influence in declining guards, for sometimes they procure the robbery. But the fact is too great a scandal—it sets a premium on dacoitie, and the employment of police escorts must be insisted upon. Not that the robbers are always deterred by the presence of guards—for we have had several instances of dacoits boldly attacking guards, even of regular infantry, and successfully plundering the treasure under their escort; the example, too, is before us of the treasure dacoitie at *Sowndha* before narrated (*vide* page 197,) in which the robbers rushed the convoy, although halted close to a police station, and of the recent case at *Arneea* in which the robbers overcame a strong escort (*vide* p. 288,) but rather that they are not likely to forego the opportunity to plunder when there should be no escort at all, or only a slender one, and every successful case gives them greater confidence. The removal of treasure should be interdicted everywhere, except under some suitable escort provided by the local police (*vide* vol. ii., pp. 125, 126.)

1st March, *Nárnoul*, 13 miles.—Drifts of sand of recent formation choked the broad dry bed of the *Dohán*, and occasioned some delay in our wending

through them, from the cart wheels getting deeply imbedded in them. The river channel crossed, we left behind us the *teebas*, or sand-hills, of unprepossessing Shekawátie, and were glad to get upon firmer ground under foot, and to come among fields of *gram* and other crops that did not require to be irrigated exclusively from wells of great depth, but flourished from the natural moisture of the soil. *Mukoondpoora* was the first village we came to, situated on the far side of the *Dohán*, at this season absorbed in the sand, and next, *Thutwáree*, built on the slope of a low hill covered with rocks. From there we wound round the base of a high hill similarly massed with great boulders of rock. The local *Názim* or Governor, met me on arrival with a lot of fine horsemen. A street of infantry, with a band, had been formed up at my tents, who presented arms as I passed up it, the band playing our National Anthem. These troops are almost as highly disciplined as our own Native Army. Later on he paid me a visit.

The late
Jhujjar
Nawáb.

Nárnoul.

2nd March, Nárnoul; halt.—The district of Nárnoul was a slice of the escheated territory that belonged to the late *Nawáb of Jhujjar*. He was executed on conviction of treasonable conduct against the British Government during the Mutiny, and his estate parcelled among the three neighbouring Sikh chieftains of *Nábha*, *Puttiála* and *Jheend*, who were loyal and had aided us with their troops. *Nárnoul* came to the share of *Puttiála*. The town is a place of great antiquity. It is considerable and contains numerous tall and

compact houses, each building forming a stronghold in itself, but they are so closely packed that it is not easy to thread the maze of gloomy winding lanes created by them. *Nusseerpore*, a mile distant, was the scene of an engagement with a body of insurgents during the Mutiny, where our fallen men and officers lie buried.

Late at evening I returned the Názim's visit at his place in the Town. A guard of honour was drawn out to receive me. My little Caboollee horse, behaved well enough during the salute, but was frightened at the "Band." I was conducted into an enclosure set round with lighted lamps, and when we all were seated and the usual civilities expressed, a *troupe* of girls of no great pretensions, *náched* and sang before us as long as the visit lasted. Several trays laid out with shawls, cloths, embroidered articles of apparel, etc., borne by finely-attired men, ushered in under a grandly dressed "gold stick," were next arrayed in order upon the ground before my chair. I counted seventeen; one tray being a bag of money. All these were presented to me in the customary way, to keep or to reject. I selected a white muslin band, which to fold round my helmet, and a small piece of satin stuff, and merely acknowledged the compliment in respect to the rest of the numerous offerings. These were thereupon ceremoniously lifted up and carried back to the "*Tôsha Khána*," or state wardrobe. The bag of money was supposed, I believe, to represent my month's salary, as though by my coming into the territory it was

Return
Visit to
the Názim.

justly my due from the *Ruler of the State*, and his part to pay it!

The Field
of Nus-
seerpore.

3rd March, Nárnoul; halt.—Threatening weather and hot. Accompanied by *Tára Chund*, the local military commandant, and by *Nund Sing*, the *Thánadar*, and their horsemen, I rode to the battle-field of Nusseerpore, and there visited the graves of the four British officers who fell in that action. The tombs were in a very neglected condition, the enclosure within which they were placed being strewed with rubbish, and the masonry injured. My two “*Equerries*” assured me it should not be so for the future. The rebels were commanded on the occasion of the encounter by one *Summund Khan*, a very active insurgent leader.

4th March, camp at Nárnoul.—Delayed here on account of the weather. Have been arranging too with the local authorities for the pursuit of some Meena Dacoits, whom we hear of in the neighbourhood. A party sent off with Approvers to examine some men of that tribe in custody in the Fort of *Kánoondh*, ten koss distant, returned last night. The Approvers claimed two of the prisoners there incarcerated as their accomplices in dacoity; they are confirmed in the declaration by the previously recorded narratives of their lives. We acquired there too, that certain “*wanted*” Meenas were at this present time at *Kôte-Pootlee*, in Jeypore limits, and I thereupon late last night deputed the Jeypore Wukeel in attendance here, on camel-back to the spot, accompanied by a *Mookhbir* or local informer, who knows them, to claim their custody. I prefer

doing everything in this way, through the local Ráj authorities. Write to Beynon at Jeypore apprising him of the arrangement.

Kánoondh is a strong fort on the confines between the cultivated country on this side and the sandy wastes of *Shekawátie* on that.

Have been obliged to make an example of some men of the Nujjeeb Tomun or force, by summarily dismissing to-day a Tomundár and a couple of Nujjeebs from the service. They were on command at Hyderabad, and were there detected in certain undue exactions and other irregularities. The Tomundár counted long service—not so the two men ;—and on the report of my Assistant at Jubbulpore, of a Naib Tomundár, the first for promotion to the higher grade, that he had borrowed money from a Nujjeeb on command at Jalnah, and denied the claim, I have passed him over for promotion to the rank of the dismissed Tomundár. Depart-
mental.

5th March, Kántee, ten miles.—We have now Kántee. crossed into *Nábha* territory, and this portion of it is that which fell to the share of the *Nábha Ruler* from what had belonged to the revolted *Jhujjur* man. It is this distribution of that territory that accounts for the frequent crossing from one jurisdiction into another. For adjoining this point three other limits also fall in, namely—*Neemrána*, *Ulwur*, and *British*. There was rain last night, and it has made the air this morning very fresh, accompanied as it is by that pleasant and enjoyable *smell of earth*, which is always so agreeable after rain. The country has too a park-like appearance,

Old Pensioners.

clumps of trees with tall buildings peeping out from among them, extensive fields of waving barley in a forward condition, and herds of Antelope in intervening glades. At one of the villages on the route, some old pensioners of the disbanded Shekawátie Force came out to meet me. They dwelt much upon the provision made for their comfort in their old age, and one of them exclaimed that if he had fifty sons, he would place them all in the service of the British Government. The grateful old fellows looked a curious lot, wearing as they did their old red lapelled coatees, with mere loin-cloths about their legs, and very misshapen forage caps. They were loud in their praises of the "*Companee Buhádoor.*" I ascended to the ruined Fort on the hill at the foot of which this town of Kántee is built. It was constructed in the period of the invasion of these provinces by the Mahrattas. The scrambling old place afforded in the Mutiny, a ready refuge to the local troops on the appearance in the neighbourhood of the rebel *Summundh Khán*. They might easily have been made to capitulate, there being no water in it.

Letter to the Rajah.

In addressing the Rajah of Pattiála to-day, on the subject of the little care taken of the tombs at Nusseerpore, I wrote: "On a late occasion of a similar representation on the part of some English officers, to H.I.M. the Emperor of France, of the neglected condition of the tombs of the British officers who fell in the siege of Toulouse, a town in French territory, that Sovereign vouchsafed a

reply that the graves of men who fell in battle in a foreign land, became the property of that land and of its rulers, and that he would immediately have those tombs repaired at his own expense ; and I only venture to narrate that noble sentiment on the part of a very great Potentate, to show your Highness in what veneration the resting-places of those who are slain in battle, are held in other civilized countries."

6th March, *Neemránah*.—A town and hill fort in *Neemránah*. *Mácherree* or *Ulwur* territory, and just now a place of romantic interest. It formed a lordship, which was in some degree independent of the sway of the suzerain the *Row Rajah* of the territory. The lord of it was deeply mortified at the assumption by the latter ruler, of all power over it, and he deliberately thereupon left the place, declaring he would not revisit it, or his family, until he could do so as sole Lord of the Manor and its hereditaments, with full rights independent of *Ulwur*. This about six or seven years ago—and his disconsolate *Ránees* have been occupying his forsaken palace ever since, in hope of his return some day. A consequent gloom seemed to have settled upon the inhabitants of the town, for they sympathized with their offended master ; and the entire place has, too, an air about it of neglect and desertion, to which the ruined condition of the shut up palace, not a window of which was open, every gate and shutter closed, and the prevailing silence, contributed mournful testimony, the sorrowing family having as vainly endeavoured to

The Sore
Complaint
of its
Lord.

persuade him to come back, as he himself had been to obtain redress. I was much impressed with the marked solitude of the spot, and it pitied me to think out the cause and of the unhappiness of the forsaken ones within those spacious, but now dungeon halls. Truly might it be said of *Neemránah* that "the grass grew in its streets, and hunger and desolation made their abode there."⁴

Robbery
of Mail
Bags.

We hear of a Dacoitie in Rewah territory. The Post-office van conveying Bhangy parcels from Mirzapore to Jubbulpore, had been plundered while passing through Rewah limits. It is a wild bit of country just there, and much infested, owing to the sheltering hills on either side of the narrow valley through which the high road runs, particularly in the neighbourhood of *Jokai*.

Dacoitie
near
Bangalore.

From Bangalore, too, the robbery is confirmed of which we had heard at Bikaner (*vide* 30th January, p. 165.) It was upon a transit van, the two inmates of which were murdered, and a considerable amount of money plundered. The police action in this case had been prompt, the great bulk of the plundered treasure being recovered, and some of the culprits arrested. Three of the number were capitally convicted, and the rest sentenced to transportation for various periods.

⁴ *Post-scriptum*.—The dissension had been acute, and the question was a difficult one, but at last it was decided to restore the estate and separate it from Ulwur, the Ruler too of which had been occasioning dissatisfaction. "Too late," exclaimed the poor dispossessed lord of it, who was lying very ill when he received the news. He died before he could return to resume the patrimony.

The murdered men were a *Mahomedan* and a *Mahratta*, the latter of whom behaved very pluckily, for he fought and wounded three or four of the *Dacoits* before he was himself disabled. The robbers were *Rhâtores* from far off *Rajpootanah*.

7th March, *Shajánpore*, four miles.—We have now ^{Shaján-}come into an isolated strip of British territory ^{pore.} surrounded by foreign ground. And although situated within British rule and limits, it is the great head-quarters, the chiefest head centre, of *Meena Dacoits*, who, although under “police surveillance,” manage altogether to evade it, and to proceed to remote districts and parts of India on expeditions of dacoity. This is my second visit to the neighbourhood. To-day, ^{Mustero of} of the body of *Meenas* who ought have been ^{the Resi-}here “present,” sixty borne on our check lists, ^{dent} ^{Meenas.} *were absent*. Of the 125 present *Meena* residents, confronted by me with Approvers, only three were found whom the latter were able to claim as accomplices, and these too, hazarded the scrutiny from knowing that the only acts of dacoitie which they could be charged with by them, were of an old date. Two others, of recent accompliceship, who were present but yesterday, took care not to be so to-day. The whole of those mustered on this occasion, were, however, in visible alarm. It is only because we have as yet admitted no more than half a dozen of the tribe as Approvers, of whom but *two* are with me here, that so many of the number looked at, were not claimed. For, according to our information, there was not a

single man among them who had *not* committed dacoitie.

Shajánpore, the chief place of the circumscribed district, is situated at the back of the high hill on the opposite side of which *Neemrána* lies. There are two small forts on the summit of the eminence. I went about the Meena quarter from an early hour of the morning. Only women and children were to seen in the settlement, the few *men* feigning to be cripples ; but I perceived some here and there darting across windows and cowering along exposed parts of their substantial dwellings. The tribe is spread throughout Rajpootanah. At Jeypore and Ulwur, Meenas are even employed to guard the crown jewels and the royal hoards deposited in vaults in the hill fortress. At Jeypore, indeed, it is said that they are even entrusted with the custodianship of the *Ráwula* or *Zenána* quarters of the palace, and to the *Thókedár*, or headman of the particular *gôte* or class so confided in, appertains the privilege of affixing the *teeka* or badge of sovereignty on the forehead of every acclaimed new ruler, without which the accession would not be considered to be duly ratified ! A great number of the tribe are *chowkidárs* or village watchmen. It is a common spectacle throughout India, that the village custodian (an hereditary office,) is, away from home, a night burglar and a highway robber ! The Meenas form a numerous class, and are subdivided into thirty or more *gôtes* or tribal divisions. They are most thickly settled hereabout, their numerous villages lying in Sheka-

The Chow-
kidár
Meenas.

wátie, in Kôte-Pootlee and Jeelroo-Pátun of Tourwátie, and throughout Ulwur territory, ranging as well among sand-hills as in the *sierra* through which we have been passing, and they may thus be said to occupy the entire region immediately bordering upon Delhi territory. I do not here refer to the allied Khêrâr and Purrihâr Meenas of farther Rajpootanah.

8th March, Shajánpore ; halt.—The Rajah of Ulwur has been good enough to have a “ Buggy Dák ” posted to take me viâ *Ulwur* to *Kerowlie*. The conveyance is even now awaiting me here. I am therefore breaking up my camp. It seemed strange to have had our encampment guarded last night by these very Meenas, every one of whom I knew to be by profession a robber, a thief, and a *Dacoit* ! We are often obliged to avail ourselves of such services in India, and of the strangest resources for safety, where no safety is or thought to be possible. There has always been a *happy-go-lucky* way among us in our career in the country, the very bare-facedness of which has contributed so much, perhaps, to our general success. It is nothing to ride up to a man bristling with arms, who has perhaps just come out from an encounter and is brooding, or whose native place has just been invaded by you, to jump off your horse and desire him to lay hold of it while you go in to look at the building or garden enclosure he is standing at—“ *Here you, ghôrá pukro* ” (Hallo there, hold my horse !)—the very boldness of which produces compliance. So I went out among these fellows

Night
Guard

The
Meenas
generally,
and of
Shaján-
pore par-
ticularly.

Their
Wealth,
their
Comfort
at Home,

during the night unattended from post to post, where they were seated "watching" and uttering their signal watch cries, and told them to *be sure to look out and watch well ; it would not do for us to be robbed !* It is a fact that Shajánpore is inhabited exclusively by Meena plunderers. As many as 500 have habitation there, and distant robbery is notoriously their livelihood. Their houses built of substantial masonry, some with upper stories to them and with underground passages ; fine wells too have been constructed by them. The land they cultivate, and duly pay revenue for, yields no more than would be sufficient for a fourth part only, or a smaller fraction, of the population, men, women and children combined, which the number of their adult males represents. They maintain fleet camels, some of which may be found secreted in the intricacies of their premises, in readiness for an expedition, or but now arrived from some distant raid ; cows, buffaloes and goats, are among their possessions. They live amid abundance and want for nothing (but to be left alone ;) their festivals of marriage and other ceremonies, whether of rejoicing or solemnity, are attended with lavish expenditure ; flesh is their food, and liquor their potation ; trinkets of gold and silver, and fine dresses, adorn, on pleasure days, the persons of their females, gold and coral ornaments and good turbans are the display of their men, bracelets and frontlets studded with coins the ornaments, and parti-coloured garments the apparel, of their children ; music and every re-

quirement, without stint, form the accompaniments of their feasts, revelling and quarrel mark their termination. Plenty they have and plenty they bestow, and there is no limit to their *charity*. And their
Charit-
ableness. Ordinary people give alms at their doors, but the charity of the Meenas is what is called *Sudda-burt*, it is *perpetual* and invites all comers to partake of it;—corn and provisions are liberally distributed to those who seek for them, a village grain-dealer is their purveyor, and his *dookán* or shop, is the granary from where all may be freely obtained, and a *Sádh* or holy man, is their almoner ! And with all this profusion and munificence, the men have no ostensible occupation, no means from which to meet so much extravagance ;—the ground they till, or rather, which they procure to be tilled, would scarcely sustain *ten* families, much less those of the five hundred there gathered. The place, too, has an air of neglect and desertion, from the continued *dours* or expeditions, and sometimes prolonged absences of the bulk of the men. A few men only are to be seen, as if idly sauntering about ; some women drawing at the wells, or children seemingly at play at dispersed spots. Their
Secrecy. But a curious observer might detect that a close intelligence was withal the part of them all ; that the eye is restless and watchful, the child is signaling something, the woman's song is the voice of warning, whether by word or intonation ; and that the man's hang-dog look, cloaks furtive glances which connect him with persons who are peering through the high thorn fences of the cattle-yards

which project from each dwelling, or with others who flit from window to window or terrace of their labyrinthine and subterranean abodes; and if a muster should be called, the rolls are found to be glaringly blank and that *French leave* has been abundantly taken! What does all this mean, and from where do these men really obtain their livelihood, and with so much to spare? ⁵

The Khôj
Question.

Employed during the day in translating several papers connected with the *Khôj* system, in the rules respecting which there seems to be some misapprehension on the part of native rulers, that conduces a great deal to the continuance of dacoitie, from the shelter from pursuit it has the effect to extend to the perpetrators (*vide* pp. 268 and 312.) These track laws are based upon village responsibility, and have been compared to the custom of our Saxon progenitors, of holding the "Hundred" responsible for property plundered within their limits. They have hitherto been intelligible. The track of crime in British territory could be carried into a Native State, aided by the local police thereof. Our police officer's might not act independently in the pursuit, and arrested parties were to be left with the local native authority if desired. So also was the action in the case of the pursuit being brought from a Native State into British territory. Search for property could only be made in the presence of the local authority. The trackers were to be *experts*, a class

⁵ P.S.—These remarks were repeated in a subsequent official report.

always ready to hand, and it was a requirement that the *Khôj* should be taken up at once, word thereof being sent to the nearest police station, or otherwise a claim for quittance would not hold good. Compensation was *not* allowable if proper precautions, such as a suitable escort, or the guardianship of the recognized village *Bulâhi* or guide, had not been taken for the security of the plundered property. The village to where the tracks should have been fairly carried, was to be responsible for the stolen amount, and compensation for it was demandable from the State in which the village was situated. But these simple enough rules, have undergone a revision in Rajpootanah, with the concurrence too, of the Government of India, the alteration being that the State in which the offence was committed, was primarily answerable, and *ultimately* that into which the criminals were traced in hot pursuit, or in which it was shown they resided, or where the plunder was found. The object of this amendment was discernible in the desire it divulged to restrict a state from too readily divesting itself of responsibility for an offence within its own border, and in the consequent necessity to show that there was no lack of promptitude in the pursuit of it into other limits and that the pursuers were there *prevented* from carrying the tracks any farther, the State where this obstruction was caused, being thereupon finally answerable for the loss sustained. But this, as already shown, led to the *Khôj* being rejected *in toto*, and to a mistaken

notion that it was unnecessary to take up any tracks (*vide* p. 268.)

Sidhpore
Dacoitie.

We have fuller particulars of the dacoitie in Guzerat, of which I had learnt a few days after its occurrence, while travelling to Bikaner (*vide* pp. 205 and 262.) It took place close to *Sidhpore* in Baroda territory, on the high road from *Ahmedabad* to *Deesa*, at dawn of the 7th January last. The gang was a mixed one of Meenas and Rhatôres, mounted upon camels and well armed, and it is declared to be one of several gangs employed by a rebellious princelet, a natural son of the Maharajah of Jodhpore, who had in dudgeon, lately *taken to the road*. The plundered convoy consisted of five camels laden with treasure under transmission from *Ahmedabad*, to *Pálee* the desert *entrepôt*. The people with the consignment resisted the dacoits, but were overpowered. The treasure, laden upon four of the camels, (gold and silver in bullion and specie to the extent of 69,000 rupees,) was transferred by the robbers to their own beasts. The fifth camel escaped plunder.

Sidhpore
Temple
Ordeal
and
Require-
ment.

Sidhpore is a place of religious resort, and where there is a Hindoo temple of great celebrity, the rivulet near which it stands, being declared to have its source from the sacred lake on Mount Aboo! I was encamped there with my regiment on its march from *Deesa* to *Surat* many years ago. In the ceremonies observed at this popular shrine or *Teeruth*, it is incumbent on the pilgrim to have his face completely shaved, without which the worship is declared by the priests, to be of none

effect and incomplete. A devout Havildár of the corps went through this requirement. It was against regimental orders for any man "to divest himself of the hair on his face." The Havildár, an excellent non-commissioned officer, was perceived, on the line of march the following morning, to have done so. He was selected for example, no notice being taken of some men who had similarly "transgressed." He was tried for the offence the same day, by a regimental court-martial, and sentenced to be degraded; and this the commanding officer confirmed. The man's defence was, *his priest's insistence*. He was, however, eventually restored to his rank under orders from army head-quarters. Certainly the prohibition was a very impolitic one. The argument was, that the priest had, with the necessity to shave the face, also declared that *only* the *dhótee* and the *junnoa* (loin-cloth and Brahminical cord,) could be worn for a certain number of days after the act of devotion, whereas the Havildár had duly appeared in *uniform* on the next day's march, and that if this was a matter of course which he could not evade, so was it (regimentally considered,) as incumbent that he should have appeared with his whiskers and moustaches, which, by his own act, he had "evaded" doing! (*Vide Journal for 1839.*) Our C.O. was a great martinet—a stickler rather for the letter than the spirit.

9th March, *Shajánpore*.—Still lingering in the evil company by which I am surrounded. The weather cleared up last night, and the stars

Anecdote
of an
instance
thereof.

Asleep at
his Post.

glittered brilliantly; but to-day it is again dark and gloomy. One of my *Nujjees* was found asleep at his post. He was a new man; but the fault is too grave to be overlooked, and he has lost his place. Have been at work the entire day—did not leave my chair from an early hour till after dark—for I wished to dispose of some papers and correspondence before my flight across country. For the reports and references are numerous, daily received from all parts of the country. Am addressing British frontier authorities in this direction on the subject of the obstructions to pursuit, presented on the border, of criminals passing either way—from native territory into ours, and *vice versâ*.

Another
Opium
Robbery.

We have information of an opium dacoitie down in *Khándesh*, the deed of *Mooltanee* robbers. On the same ground *Mooltanees* had, at a previous date, successfully committed a similar robbery on a train of forty carts, conveying opium. On the present occasion they obtained, it is said, but a couple of chests of the drug, valued at 3200 rupees. Their plan is first to assail a convoy with a shower of stones in the dark, and then to fall on it with a rush. This generally gives the plunderers a clear field, and undisputed possession of the prey: Some of the present offenders have fallen into custody through the accident of their detention on suspicion by an intelligent Patell, by whose village they were escaping. The habit of the *Mooltanees* is to follow up convoys of piece goods, sugar, opium, &c., while under conveyance.

upon carts. They are a tribe of bullock carriers like the *Brinjáras*, whom they much resemble, except that they are *Mahomedans*. They leave treasure carts to *Meenas* and *Rhátôres*, if engaged on the same field as themselves. Nor do they meddle with camel trains. They penetrate into Khándesh generally from Baroda territory, and when taken into custody declare themselves to be *Bhát Mendicants*. Another section of the same class are the *Jutturs* (called also *Koommés*), whose field is in the direction of Shorapoor-Bedur, to whom Meadows Taylor and I had a good deal to say some years ago on that frontier, when he was in political charge of that Bedur Province, and I was Sleeman's Assistant in the Thuggee and Dacoitie Department for Bombay Territory (*vide* Journal for 1847.) *Jutturs* are in the above direction, an offshoot of the *Juttees* or *Getæ* (*vide* footnote, p. 158.)

10th March, *Shajánpoor*, Sunday.—Am considerably out of my reckoning; for I took this to be *Easter-day*, which is yet six weeks distant! At my office table even to-day, and with a headache too! Have drafted my letters to the frontier British officers and to Eden for Rajpootanah, on the vexed question of *Khôj*, supplying each with copies of the correspondence on the subject, and with translations of the various *Roobekáries*, or vernacular proceedings relating thereto, and have said that reciprocity in pursuit and arrest between the authorities of frontier States, "*was the golden rule*," if divested of all extra-judicial lights of "*expediency*" or "*policy*;" and that if acted up

Recipro-
cal
Pursuit.

to in good faith on both sides, without reference to the *status* of the reclaiming authority, it could not fail of being productive of the desired aim, and to a speedier removal of the existing difficulty. A well-governed State may be infested by robbers, and that may diminish its claims to respect; but the claims to redress *on the part of the man plundered in it*, who should trace the robbers into a better governed territory, would not be the less righteous. Moreover, in the case where the two adjoining territories were equally and as notoriously the abiding places of criminals, who plundered indiscriminately in both, of which one State was well-governed and the other but indifferently, as for instance *here*, where I am encamped, on the *Delhi* and *Ulwûr* frontier, where *Meenas* as notoriously reside in the one as in the other district, it would be hard if *Khôj* taken, say, from *Ulwur* limits, into British territory, should be refused, or compensation declined, when, on the other hand demanded or enforced in the similar case of *Khôj* being carried from British into *Ulwur* territory! Not that it is so denied unswervingly, but that it is important that where criminals so *interminglingly* reside, as *Meenas* for instance do who are spread about in this direction, the rules for their pursuit and capture equally in all, and for compensation from the State within which was the *venue* of the robbery, should be placed upon an uniform footing “as the fairest means (I added,) of inducing the active co-operation of all the Rulers for the effectual suppression of the formidable evil.” For under

operation of the existing rules "for the more ready apprehension" (as those rules are preambled,) "of persons committing offences in British districts, and flying for refuge into Native States," (and of Act VII. of 1854, which removed "certain doubts and misapprehensions on the matter,") "Native States," I said, "have been debarred from pursuing offenders into British territory, the conditions under which they may do so being tantamount to a prohibition."⁶ This created, I went on, a tendency for the subjects of Native States to *reverse the order of things*; to commit dacoitie in Native territory and be safe from pursuit by "flying for refuge" *into British territory*, or, in other words, *to convert British territory into a "Surna," or Sanctuary!* In this manner, and by the interpretation given to, or rather by the misunderstanding before pointed to, of a recent alteration of the section of the International Code of Rajpootanah (Rule VIII.,) plunderers were induced, as I put it, to rob with greater immunity, and a vitality and vigour imparted to the predatory system, which *encouraged* its followers; and this, too, in regions where there was a facility for tracking them afforded by the nature of the soil, and where, as in Guzerat and other sandy tracts, *the science of tracking* and detection, had become a profession, and the laws thereof, from long usage, been acquiesced in by the inhabitants, from time out of mind. There have been many indications of this unsatisfactory

⁶ This was at a later period in some degree rectified, by certain extradition treaties with Native Rulers.

state of things. The recent complaint on the part of Mr. Nasmyth, the Commissioner for the *Hurri-ánah* frontier, in the instance of the parcel van dacoitie near Rhôtuck, by a gang of camel-mounted *Shekáuuts*, under the leadership of Joháhir Sing and two others (*vide* pp. 267, 268, and 310,) in which the Khétree authorities refused the Khôj, basing their objection to it upon the interpretation of which the declared alteration in the Khôj law was susceptible, notwithstanding that the robbers had been fairly traced into Khétree territory, was a case in point (*vide* p. 268.) The *Názims* or local governors of *Nárnoul* of Puttiála, and *Báwal* of Nábha, have moreover made similar complaints to me; the former declaring he had “a hundred cases of *Khôj* followed up by his police, being declined by *Khétree* and other authorities over his border.” The local authority on the frontier post at *Dádma* of Jheend, also informed me of similar refusals in *Shekawátie*, to recognize his *Khôj*, a particular instance whereof was of a *mail robbery*, in which the mail runner was murdered and his mail bag plundered; and there have been like representations from other quarters, notably from *Ajmere*, a British district, the Superintendent of which attributed the increase of dacoitie in his charge, to the same indicated change in the *Khôj* rules (*vide* p. 339,) a change which the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab has characterized, in his review of the Rhôtuck cart case, as *a measure of very doubtful propriety*. I had already, two years before, submitted to Government, that “on the principle of

reciprocal extradition, it would be just if equal license to pursue fugitives into British territory," were accorded to Native authorities on the border "as possessed by our own officers in carrying pursuit into Native States. They would then not be so ready to recriminate by declining ours." ⁷

Another mail robbery down in Khándesh (Bombay,) on the evening of the 5th instant. The Dák runner was waylaid when arrived close to *Dhoolia*, the principal or *Suddur* station of the district and headquarters indeed of the Khándesh Bheel Police. He received a spear wound and was deprived of his wallet or mail bag. The robbery was a *chanced shot*, for the mail contained nothing valuable; but the information shows that there is a gang lurking about for plunder in that neighbourhood—probably some *Meena-Rhátôres*, the footprints of six men, wearing shoes of *Hindustan manufacture*, having been taken up from the scene of the robbery to a spot among the rocks in the hills near *Malligarm*, where the wallet was found, the letters contained in it being scattered about. The track was there lost, the ground being rocky; but the *clue* will be, *the pattern of the shoes*, for Khándesh is a far

Mail
Robbery
in Khán-
desh.

Shoe
Prints.

⁷ P.S.—These and the previous remarks on the same subject, had place in a subsequent full review of the intricate question officially submitted by myself to the Government of India, and the matter was set right, but not, I thought, entirely. Jealousy of jurisdiction still cropped up, and the handicapping continued to be a grievance against us. For although, as I stated, the extended meaning imputed to the new law, was repudiated, the sense conveyed by its loosely defined very words, was still the basis upon which claims for compensation for robberies were adjudged by the International Courts.

country from "Hindustan," and strangers must have been the wearers of those shoes.

Buggy
Dák.

11th March, on the road.—My camp was struck this morning, to be taken on to Delhi where to await me. I had still some Reports to go through with, and it was eleven o'clock and had become very hot before I could start. I have work in Kerowlie and Dholepore. The research after the murderers of our Nujjees and Approvers in those parts last November, has been lagging and needs pushing on. And from Dholepore it will be but a stretch to Gwalior, where to see our boy with his regiment in the adjacent cantonments at Morár.

This "Buggy Dák," as it is called, by no means implies a *Buggy* or mere *Gig* that has been provided for me to travel in, but more a room or *coupé upon wheels*. For it is a comfortable hooded barouche, drawn by four horses, ridden by postilions, jauntily dressed in a green and red uniform, resembling artillery wagon drivers but for colour, rather than mere postboys. And ride well they do too, and steadily steer their nags and the conveyance through sand and the deep ruts of the rude way—for there is no made road—at best it is a mere track, and often not even that, but a short cut across country, some distant village or hillock indicating the *direction* to be taken. The first stage was accomplished fairly well by the four mares forming the team, until impeded by heavy sand in the bed of the *Sábi*, where the horses were changed for an equal number of bullocks, those never failing steeds (although not

steeds,) wherever sand or slush have to be overcome. The *Sábi* gets lost in a *jheel* emptying into the great *Nujjeef Jheel*, which runs into the *Jumna* near Delhi. The next stage was served by four stout *Caboolie* nags of the skew-bald sort—little trumps, who put their shoulders to the labour, and did their bit of ground excellently. Then came a batch, the off wheeler of which was a mare of mares, who reared and would not move on for the heavy sand. So a bevy of neighbouring villagers was put into requisition, and these, with much good humour, shoved the coach along through the difficulty. This surmounted, the willing little *Caboolies*, who had been brought along with us, were again yoked on, wooden yokes being used for horses as for bullocks in *Rajpootanah*. That stage got over, it was found that the next relay of nags was unequal to the task, labouring ineffectually, so that the poor *Caboolies* again became the *stand by*, and they once more yielded to the breathless service. Thus by 5 p.m. we had reached *Rusgir*, only half-way, or about twenty-one miles from our starting place! At this point the ground was harder, and the team there posted of four mares, being put to it, did its long stage of *ten* miles in good time. It had now become dark. Another “four” accomplished the remaining eleven miles, by flambeau lights, held by running footmen—the whole cavalcade, horsemen, camelmen, the rumbling post carriage, and all, coming into *Ulwur* with a clatter. A gun flashed and reverberated, fired from the fortified heights above the city, the

signal of our approach. It was followed by a salute, gun taking up gun along the whole line of loftily perched towers in succession. I was taken to the same garden retreat I before had occupied (1864,) the spacious billiard room of which was on the present occasion utilized for my accommodation, and, late as the hour was, dinner in a series of native dishes of sorts, was served up to me, with champagne and what else not, with profuse hospitality. A small compartment, partitioned off from the billiard room by heavy *pūrdahs* or hangings, had been furnished as a bedroom, and there I slept out the night right comfortably. I think I have mentioned that a wife of the *Maharajah of Bikaneer*, is a sister of the present young *Rao Rajah of Ulwur*.

Ulwur.

12th March, *Ulwur*, about forty-two miles from *Shajānpore*.—When I got up this morning, presentations of *Dálees* of fruits, vegetables, sweetmeats, almonds and raisins, *etcetera*, and the accustomed sealed bag of money, awaited me. Old *Roop Náráyun*, the Rajah's worthy minister, was also in attendance with kind messages from the Palace, but I excused myself from going there, as the ceremony of the visit and of the return of it by the Rajah, would detain me. The money was remitted to the *Tosha-Khána* as before, but the fruit, etc., were retained, my Duffedar, the only man of my establishment with me, coming in for the sweetmeats and abundant groceries. While at breakfast (plentifully provided,) a huge bouquet was brought in and ceremoniously presented to

me, made from the charming spring flowers which so delightfully gem the grounds of the pleasant retreat—double wall-flowers, sweet-peas, sweet-williams, heliotrope, mignonette, and roses—spreading delicious fragrance. Birds, too, carol in the garden, to which the shade and foliage of the many handsome trees, contribute additional charm. I sit under them and smoke the matutinal cheroot. And, as if to offer further attraction, the walls, as well of the billiard room as of the adjacent garden palace, that in which Colonel Eden and the rest of us were entertained last December, are hung with paintings of ballet dancers and such like, among which *agaceries*, a fine portrait of Sir David Ochterlony, of stern countenance, who took so prominent a part in the conquest and the settlement of this part of the Delhi frontier, contrasts grotesquely. Then there is a perfect galaxy within, of chandeliers crowded with crystal lustres, handsome furniture, inviting cosy chairs, and softly cushioned sofas, clocks of every design and accomplishment, *bric-à-brac*, rich ornaments of gold and silver,—and without, cascades, spraying fountains, and fountains balancing oranges and sheeny balls, marble pillars and terraces, statuettes cloistered in shady nooks, and other such enchantments,—all I think described in a previous visit (*vide* Journal for 1864.)

Ulwur was included in the domains of “*Múchèry*,” and belonged to the Bhurtpore Rajah. He was dispossessed of the appanage for his hostility to the British Government, and the title

of *Rao Rajah* accorded to the new ruler. The territory lies in what is called *Méwátie*, or the country of the *Meos*, a turbulent and predatory race, much made use of by former Native Rulers in their feuds against each other. *Tijjára* was the capital, but *Ulwur* is the present metropolis. The country is very hilly, and abounds with defiles and fastnesses. *Ulwur*, the city, is situated on a declivity at the foot of a high hill, on the lofty summit of which is the principal fortress or keep. This strong post is connected by long lines of fortifications, that take in and inclose the tops of all the neighbouring crags, and it contains several excavated *tunkas* or reservoirs of excellent water. In an intricate position within this mantled height, is a secret vault, in which the crown jewels and the *Rajah's* treasures are deposited under the safe trust of a privileged "gôte," or tribal section of the *Meenas*. The *Meos*, who chiefly people the territory, are not so confided in, but they are often associated with *Meenas* in acts of robbery, and are regarded to be very brutal when so engaged, or in ravaging expeditions, or on hired acts of retaliation. At the foot of the city hill, in an inclosed recess, is a piece of water, better described as a very deep pool than as either lake or pond. Flights of stone steps lead down into it on its four sides, and on one side above it is an open-faced *Kiosk*, where the *Rajah* occasionally sits for the sake of the airing. The water in this reservoir, has a very ill-favoured appearance, yet it is perpendicularly deep up to its very edges.

Abutting on a side of it, is the Rajah's Palace, looking out upon the frowning hills everywhere about it.

In another case of dacoitie on the night of the 10th of this month, in Khándesh, I consider we have found the anticipated clue to the perpetrators of the mail robbery near Dhoolia, a few nights previously (*vide* p. 341.) A consignment of goods, arrived at *Munmár* by rail from Bombay, had been sent on upon a cart for conveyance to *Malligaum*. It was plundered the same night by a gang of the same number as in the previous case, who also were by their foot-prints, *found to be wearing shoes made in Hindostan*. They had thrown down their plunder on finding that it merely consisted of some English boots and shoes, and had dispersed. Two of their number were, *by their shoes*, arrested at *Munmár* itself. They have been prematurely released, for the name of one of them, *Ooda Rhatôre*, was not only on our lists of wanted men, and whom we knew to be somewhere down in that direction, but corresponds moreover with that of one of the four men rescued from Ward's custody! * I have requested his re-arrest, and transfer when found, to Ward at Jalnah. I am persuaded with the importance of this.

Goods'
Cart
Dacoited.

* *Vide* p. 163.

From *Hassan in Mysore*, we have an account of a dacoitie on the night of the 3rd of this month, by the details of which we recognize the work of my old acquaintances the *Khaikarees*, who, there and down Madras, are called *Kul-Kôrwees* (also *Korwurs* and *Korchooroos*.) They effected an entrance into the

Dacoity in
Mysore.

By
Kaikarees
alias
Kul-
kôrwees.

premises, a substantial house forming a square and inclosing a yard, by climbing on to the roof, descending from which into the middle yard or square, they laid open the front door from the inside, to admit their companions, and then broke into the several rooms that opened into the yard. They used lighted torches, were armed with bamboos, had their faces smeared with ashes, black blankets girt about their bodies, and dirty white cloths wound round their heads. They deprived the women of the house of their personal ornaments, and the men (who were *Lingáyats*) of the silver *lingum* boxes, worn by this sect either suspended from the neck or fastened to the upper arm ; they further broke up the utensils of the house and gutted it in search of plunder, but, finding nothing more, they belaboured the good man's son, and decamped bodily through the village. The inhabitants had taken up the alarm, but no attempt was made to arrest the plunderers.*

* P.S.—My report on the Khaikarees as Dacoits, the first ever made exposing their habits as such, was dated in 1849, when I was Assistant General-Superintendent, for the Bombay Circle. It was printed and widely circulated by the Bombay Government. In subsequent further reports of them I showed that the tribe extended, under various denominations, throughout Coorg and Mysore, far into Madras territory, in the Nizam's dominions, in Berar, the Central Provinces, and Central India. Following on that report they were successfully proceeded against by us and kept down in Bombay, Berar, and Central India, and in some measure in the dominions of the Nizam ; but the same opportunities were not available to the special department in their other fields of depredation. They are a very indefatigable race of born robbers, and are remarkably expert in perpetrating burglary more particularly, "the master-piece (as I reported,)

Left Ulwur at 1 p.m. in another four-horsed carriage, the postilions driving rapidly whenever a piece of made road intervened. The route lay through *Mála-Khêra*, where I was encamped for ten days in 1865; and here I was greeted by the local Thakoor with a salute of guns from his towers. He came down in person from his place to meet me, accompanied by the usual following, and was very courteous. We then pushed on to *Rájghur*, reaching it at dusk, and drove through the town by a circuitous route, another salute being fired as we did so, in slow succession, from the lofty fortifications high up among the rocks, the people gathering on their housetops and at their doorways to look at us. Arrived at his tents, I was hospitably received by Lieutenant Roberts of the Rajpootanah Agency, encamped here on boundary duty.

13th March, Rájghur.—The fortress at this point is strongly posted at a neck or gorge of the black stony hills which form the feature of the territory; and here in a fine palace within it, the Rajah of Ulwur keeps, perhaps immures, his family, and, if rumour is reliable, holds orgies. The walls of the fort are very lofty, and are flanked by tall circular bastions, the corresponding length from crest to base of which, give them a narrow funnel or round pillar-like appearance. On the heights above the fort, other works lend it additional protection.

of their vocation as plunderers," of which many notices are given in the present Journal. Their ostensible occupation is mat and basket making from leaves of the date tree.

From
Ulwur to
Rájghur.

The
Rajah's
Chateau
of
Rájghur.

Close to the fort entrance are several large trees, shady and full foliaged, with water at hand, where travellers rest before penetrating the recesses of the rocky region, or on emerging from it; and these accessories serve to relieve the spot of the donjon-like appearance the gloomy portal of these sable hills is otherwise invested with.

Kaikarees
in the
Central
Provinces.

The *Khaikarees* just mentioned continue to be busy. Down in *Nimar* (Central Provinces,) they have lately committed a dacoitie of their own sort. A gang of sixteen of the tribe fell upon the house of a liquor seller a week ago, and plundered the poor man of all there was worth taking. They did all this by torchlight.

Visit of
Thakoors.

I was visited by two old Thakoors from *Shekawátie*. They are in attendance, among others collected here from other parts, to assist in certain boundary inquiries going on under Roberts. He tells me, that while seated with him as assessors in these disputes, they are often charged to their faces, by the summoned witnesses, with their part in the very acts of oppression they have been deputed by their master, the Ruler of Jeypore, to assist him in investigating and adjusting!

14th March, *Kerowlie*, 70 miles from *Ulwur*.—Left *Rájghur* at four in the afternoon yesterday. To get out of the entanglement of the hills, we had to retrace about four miles of the way, so as to be able to fetch *Machêry* on the other side of them, arrived at which, at dark, we continued the long drive across country, throughout the night, jolting and bumping, but getting along. At

Night
Travel-
ling.

midnight for about ten miles, the way was missed, and thus two intermediate relays of stage horses were missed also, but the four mares who were the victims, brought us at last to a staging-post, and so earned their own release from the toil. At that point we had crossed into Jeypore territory, and the country became open and free of hills. At *Hindown*, the extreme point for a wheeled conveyance, I took the opportunity to have a dacoitie authenticated, which we had hitherto been unable to get satisfactorily verified. It had been spoken to by an Approver of the *Khunjur* tribe, as the deed of a gang of that class of robbers, and was committed at nightfall (their invariable hour,) by torchlight, upon the house of a Sahoocar previously marked down, who and another inmate were killed, and two or three other members of the household wounded. I inspected the premises and the approaches to it, and was impressed with the clever way in which the dacoitie was carried out, the situation of the town being sequestered and intricate, the ground broken, and the position difficult to reach. There had been a reticence on the part of the people of the plundered house, in giving details of the outrage, because the robbed articles had been pledged to them, and a general demand for the production of such things would be awkward to meet; but, chiefly through fear of provoking a repetition of the visit should they tell too circumstantially of it. The houses of the somewhat large town, are curiously constructed of long flat slabs or flakes

Hindown.

A Dacoitie
verified.

of the red stone with which the hills in the neighbourhood abound. *Hindown* enjoyed palmy days, and was a large city before the appearance of the Mahrattas; but it was sacked by those ruthless invaders, and has ever since remained thinly inhabited.

Bhangy
Carriers.

Unable to travel any further by the horse *Dák*, I here changed to an open *Peenus* or *sedán*, borne on men's shoulders, my few belongings being packed in netted bags slung at each end of a bamboo carried across a shoulder by a *Bhangy Burdár*, or parcel carrier, who kept pace with us. The persons in the habit of carrying loads in this way, are generally of the low or *scavenger* caste, known as *Buhingees*, hence I suppose the transposition of their name to the thing they carry, namely, the *bhangy* or load itself. Perhaps, too, their own by-name, is derived from the word *báhin*, or *left hand*, and was applied to such persons from their not caring for the caste prejudices that abhorrently denied to the right hand what should appertain only to the left, their *occupation* as sweepers, naturally cancelling such scrupulous observances,—but I am not aware of the correct derivation of the expression *Buhingee*, as it may as possibly have originated in some story or legend, or caste ceremony, connected with some *Báhin* or sister of the founder of the sect; and this seems probable from the pronunciation of the word. The country was now very wild and hilly, with much broken ground in the way, and it was evening before I was delivered at the *Shikár*

Bág at *Kerowlie*, much scorched by the heat. Platters Kerowlie. of native food of sorts, were brought to me soon after my arrival, with friendly messages from the Rajah. It was now nearly dark, and I was glad to dismiss the people who had attended me, and to be left alone, gloomy, and of uninviting aspect, although the place was a low building of stone, in which I had alighted, and its interior arrangements somewhat of a rude sort. The spot is in a kind of garden retreat, a narrow but deep river running by it, and was called *Shikár Bág*, I believe, from being the hunting seat or *box*, as it were, in which the shooting or hunting excursions assembled, which have engaged so chiefly the time of the Rulers of this petty State.

15th March, *Kerowlie*.—More trays brought at morning, of things to eat, and some curry made of some fish which the Rajah had *shot* yesterday in one of the deep pools of the river. I visited him to-day in his fine and yet hardly grand "Palace," an uncouth pile of barbaric grandeur. A stronghold or fort, consisting of high stone walls, with a succession of bastions, rose out of the centre of the town. The place was sacked by the Mahrattas, and the territory stripped by them of its goodliness—an impoverishment it has not yet recovered from.

There was a good deal of nonsense on the part Kerowlie
Obstruc- of the *Kerowlie* Ruler in the matter of co-operation. tions. tion in our earlier proceedings against professional criminals resorting to this shelter. The country is wild and mostly forest, in which dacoits not only

readily found refuge, and from there sallied on their periodical expeditions, as also did the *Budhuck* tribe very particularly, but where they were also screened, and considerable opposition to our measures for their suppression offered by the local officials. This kind of thing went on for some time, notwithstanding every remonstrance. It was ascribed to the prevailing confusion consequent on the disputed succession then going on to the chieftship of the State. But by-and-by matters became worse—or at best there was no change for the better. Criminals whose arrests were desired were sheltered by the State officials—their arrests were opposed by its subjects—countenance was given by the local Durbar to *Budhuck* and other fugitives, whom the special department for their suppression had succeeded in getting driven out of Gwalior and Dholepore territory, and in preventing from taking refuge in Bhopal and Indore limits. All this was occasioned by the venality of the Kerowlie minister of the period. He was, on the complaint of our Thuggee officers, removed from the office at the instance of the Agent to the Governor-General for the States of Rajpootanah, the late Colonel Sutherland, and this cleared the way a good deal. But later on the obstructions were resumed. We discovered that the existing *Dewan* had even connived with some *Budhuck* gangs in the perpetration of some fresh cases of dacoitie of occurrence subsequent to the suppression of the Mutiny. For this formidable tribe (*Budhucks*), had, by their munificent payments to

the local authorities, obtained immunity, and a sort of prescriptive right from old custom to occupy the recesses, as well of the *Oudh Terrai* as of the adjoined forests of *Kerowlie* and *Dholepore*, from both of which sheltered posts they would sally forth on their distant expeditions, and find safe asylum in on their return. On the arrest by our Assistant for Oudh (Major T. H. Chamberlain,) of certain of the criminals in those recent cases, they even produced a safe conduct pass, bearing the signature of the Minister himself, enjoining local subordinates not to molest them, and certifying that they were *honest individuals* ! On my bringing this to notice, for I had now become General Superintendent, this minister was also removed from his office at the instance of General George Lawrence, then Agent to the Governor-General for *Rajpootanah*. I have still, however, occasion for complaint. Nothing very assuring has yet been accomplished in satisfaction of the murder of our detectives last November in this neighbourhood. The spot itself where this deed was perpetrated was *at the Chumbul* in *Dholepore* ground, but the scene of it, and of a subsequent encounter with the murderers, lay in the midst of the quadruple boundaries of the four States of *Dholepore*, *Bhurtpore*, *Kerowlie*, and *Gwalior*, in a part of the country called *Bhind*, surrounded by dense jungle and brushwood, wherein the marauders had posted themselves. I had deputed a party, accompanied by a couple of *Budhuck* Approvers, to this forest to search out some registered criminals of that tribe,

Account
of the
Recent
Murder
of some
Thuggee
Police at
Kooa-
Khêra.

and a fugitive Dacoit convict, named *Futteh Sing*, of the *Bedowreah* tribe, who had escaped from our custody after he had been formally admitted as an Approver, of whom we had obtained intelligence in that direction, that particular region being common ground for *Bedowreahs*, as well as for *Budhuck* and other criminal classes and rebels, to congregate and find shelter in. Our Duffedar who had the conduct of the arresting party, had sent the two *Budhuck* Approvers, accompanied by a couple of *Nujjeebs*, to search the strip through which the *Chumbul River* flowed. They were recognized by some *Bedowreah* rebels who, under one *Gujádhur Sing Tháikoor*, had been hunted out of Gwalior territory, and had ensconced themselves in the village of *Kooa-Khêra*, situated within the *Dáng* or forest, amid much broken and intricate ground, difficult for foot or horseman to pass through without a guide, forest and hills extending for miles round about it. These fellows fell upon our men in the vicinity of the place, tied them together, two and two, back to back, and cast them into the *Chumbul River*, after barbarously mutilating them. Upon receiving intelligence of this from the Duffedar, the *Dholepore Ruler* promptly despatched some men in pursuit of the criminals, on coming up with whom at *Akhi*, a small fort beyond *Kooa-Khêra* in the vicinity of the scene of the outrage, an encounter took place. In this a *Rissaldar* and a *Sepoy*, in the service of the *Dholepore Durbar*, and another of our *Nujjeebs*, named *Moonnah Sing*, were shot, but not before

the latter had himself cut down and killed one of the Dacoits. The bandits escaped, but some members of their families and a couple of their men were captured. A good deal of correspondence ensued, and assurances given by the several rulers on whose borders the criminals had refuge, but nothing satisfactory resulted, and I am come here to urge the adoption of some more effectual measures, the offence being a glaring instance of open defiance aimed at our operations (*vide* p. 31—close of 1866.)

The Ruler of this petty State is by birth a *Jádow* or *Yádoo* Rajpoot of the Lunar race, of which tribe he is the recognized head. This chief, of dark visage and unkingly, yet received me courteously though bluntly. He was surrounded by his courtiers and Yadoo followers, who stood closely about him with sword and shield, a wild lot. After a while, he dismissed them all, and I remained alone with him. He seemed to be conscious of what I had to say. I spoke to him of the necessity to seize the murderers; that this could no longer be delayed, or the failure to do so be tolerated—it must be done—that his forests too readily afforded shelter to plunderers; that it would be to cast a doubt on his intelligence to suppose that he was not aware of it, or aware, too, on whom to lay the blame;—he was the Ruler and not a wanting one if he would put his mind to it;—that my accusation was a serious one, and redress was our claim; his jungles must be scoured, the culprits hunted up and produced, and nothing short

Interview
with the
Ruler.

of this, or we must know the reason why they harried the country ;—did they regard him as impotent, or worse, as their abettor ?—would he risk his loyalty to us for such miscreants ?—*was he afraid of them ?* He replied he had endeavoured to arrest them, and that as I had now come to him in person on the subject, he would put on a greater pressure than before. He had already seized two of the gang and some members of their families (alluding to the persons arrested after the encounter ;) that the banditti was composed of high caste Rajpoots, *Bedowreahs and Sukkurwárs*, desperadoes, who had given out that they would one day slay him, because of his part in capturing their women. He had these in custody here. Would I take them over and the other prisoners ? I said I would examine the men, but that we never interfered with the families of criminals, except we had direct evidence of their own personal complicity (as in the case of the *Megphunnah Thugs* (*vide* p. 126.) But they had already been sent, and with them the two arrested men ;—for on my return to the Shikár-Bág, under a guard at some distance were a couple of palanquins, in which the captive women were stated to be ! I declined to see them, and the two conveyances were thereupon borne away, but I examined the two male prisoners separately, named *Moorlee Sing* and *Móhun Sing*. They were careful, and professed being merely the household servants of *Gujjádhur Sing*, the leader of the gang, but I obtained from them the incidents of the occasion. I believe the

Tahsildár of the conterminous town and district of *Bárree*, connived at the escape of the gang from *Kooa-Khêra*. He was present when the village was surrounded by the pursuit from *Dholepore*, but took no active part in the proceeding, withheld co-operation while affecting to afford it, is declared to have persuaded the *Zumindars* of the locality to refrain on their part also, so that when the village was entered it was found to be deserted, the only persons in it being these two men and the families of the gang but just then broke away, escaping, as it was enabled to do, by the jungle outlet in the direction of the village of *Roodera*, a defile, he of *Bárree* was supposed to be guarding when he posted himself and men there, that post having been selected by himself in the arrangements for the capture of the marauders. Such were the incidents of the occasion as gathered here.

The *Puchpêree*, a small but deep river, passes by *Kerowlie*. It is difficult to cross, having high and precipitous banks. Later on the *Rajah* paid me his return visit, crossing from the opposite side of it in little raft-like boats, accompanied by a numerous armed retinue, all equipped for the chase, he himself being armed with sword, buckler, and a fine English double-barrelled rifle. I observed that his followers were similarly provided with English firearms. They all had a wild appearance, and looked more as if they were sallying on some foray. The visit completed, the whole posse went straight away into the adjoining forest by the way of the river bank. He expressed

The
Rajah's
Visit.

himself pleased by my visit, said "he liked me" for the work I was engaged on, and that "for nothing would he himself be more required to answer, when summoned to the presence of 'Ishwur Purmêshwur,' than for the protection of the lives and property of the poor." I tried to discover cant in this utterance, but it came seemingly impromptu, and falling from such rugged and unpolished lips, and so outspoken in the hearing of the intent crowd, yeomen, yokels and courtiers, who stood gathered around him, I am disposed to think that he meant it rather to imply that *he held them, too*, to be answerable to himself commensurately, in the matter I had come about, and would enforce it.

Dhole-
pore.

16th March, Dholepore, about 33 miles from Kerowlie.—After the Rajah left yesterday, I proceeded with my journey on a small elephant provided by him, attended by some horsemen and armed foot-runners. The way lay through much stony ground and deep and extensive nullahs, and the progress was consequently slow. At a distance of six miles, reached only at dusk, a *palkee* awaited me, and in it I was carried throughout the night—through *Shri-Mâtra*, an independent fief of Kerowlie, held by a junior branch of the same family, through *Bârree*, mentioned before, and at daybreak by "Chowkee," an old watch-post, where, lying neglected upon the ground, was an immense brass gun—arriving here at 8 a.m. under a salute from the fort, I had ' ' ' drunk my cup of tea, when, lo ! there was

the Máharána, come thus early to see me at his own travellers' bungalow (for this was erected at his expense,) and I did not lose the opportunity of "consulting" him also, as I put it, in the matter (murder of our men,) I had come about.

After breakfast, served by the Máharána's ^{Interview with the Máharána.} servants specially kept up by him at this guest house for the entertainment of English visitors, I paid him my return visit at his Palace, a building of no great pretensions, but spacious and not crowded upon. He received me in a very affable manner, in a long airy room of lofty windows opening upon a balcony that overlooked the stream. He was attired in white robes, as were they who attended him, and he wore no jewellery, nor any arms. Of simple and unassuming manners, he made himself very agreeable, and responded cordially to my request for some combined and more energetic measures for the arrest of the perpetrators in the tragedy at Kooa-Khêra. He stated his readiness to co-operate in that aim, that at present the gang had taken refuge in their haunts in 'Bhind, which being within Gwalior territory, more pressure might be looked for from there. If the fugitives should be pushed his way, he would take care to intercept them. His own action in the pursuit first started, had been, as already noticed (p. 356,) both prompt and energetic, and he had, too, yet to avenge the death on that occasion of his *Rissaldár*, a valued officer, the loss of whom he deplored: "I might be sure, therefore, no refuge would be found by those

bud-maashees (evil-doers) in his territory." He made no allusion to the supposed connivance in their escape on the part of his official at *Bárree*—nor did I, as he was in so favourable a vein, but I think that, so far, I have succeeded in placing the matter in better training. It is strange that conspicuous for zealous attention to every request directed to this State, of which the ready part displayed by the present Ruler on the occasion adverted to was an instance, there should be nothing *binding* to impel it. Centrally situated, it had offered the Thuggee police essential aid on several occasions, as exemplified in the pursuit of the *Koel* Thugs in my predecessor's time, a bad class of that sort if any sliding scale may be assigned to the degree of wickedness equally practised by all the miscreants, and in the search for other murderers and depredators who infested the territory in our earlier proceedings. The treaties with the State were, as I reported last year, very barren of any engagements on its part in the sense referred to: "No subordinate co-operation is guaranteed, no supremacy acknowledged, and the State, declared to be one of independent sovereignty, is even exempted from all interference on the part of the British Government. And, although according to one of those treaties, *amity and alliance* were stipulated, from which a condition of a certain amount of concurrence and compliance with the wishes of the British Government was to be understood, that advantage even would seem to be lost in the treaty which followed (No.

XXXIV.,) the last entered into, by which the former one was made *null and void*, and no provision made for the renewal of those previous or any other conditions" (*vide* my Report on the Conflict of Laws.)

Dholepore is one of the only two *Ját* States among the nineteen principalities comprised in Rajpootanah, *Bhurtpore* being the other. It is situated on the hither bank of the *Chumbul* river, and it is at this point, that is, from the opposite side of that river, that the hilly country commences, so favourable to the incursions of plunderers. A very villainous bit of ground is the region of the Chumbul. I have *prospected* it on some previous occasions. *Bhind*, the nursery of Bedowreah dacoits, that in which the present fugitives are located, is a district comprised in the angle formed by the junction, at no great distance off, of the *Sinde* with the *Chumbul* and its tributary streams the *Pohonj*, the *Besálee*, and the *Kooáree*, the intricacies and ravines of which form surpassingly difficult ground.

I had no time to look at *Shah Jehán's* mosque, and other fine local structures of old date, for the *Máharána* had sent on relays of post horses on the road to Gwalior, for me to go on at once, so that I started at 1 p.m., in the heat of the day, in the conveyance he had provided me with, another salute being fired as I left, from his fort on the bank of the Chumbul. The road being the trunk one that runs right away from Agra to Gwalior and Indore, and onwards, it was easy for the pair of good horses to carry on at a good

The
Chumbul
Defiles.

Vanishing
Horsemen.

pace. The river was crossed by a bridge of boats lately constructed, some flying horsemen accompanying us, relieved from post to post, as we ran along. The road, an excellent one, was precipitous on either side, *tumbling*, as it in a manner did, across hills and intricate ravines, or stretching from top to top of craggy hillocks, and through defiles surmounted with wild peaks, crowned at frequent intervals with small *sungas* or watch-posts, rudely constructed of piled stone or fragments of rock in some recess or nook in the hill side. It was nothing to go along here by daylight, wildly solitary though the way is; but at night, when the local brigands are abroad waylaying, and on the look out for prey—for the mail cart and passenger vans, as of late more eagerly—the journey is imposing. I have performed it, to and fro, several times by the mail cart, and the driver and myself only, and sometimes an uncertain *Bárgir* or ostler mounted behind, can tell of the ventures we ran; for the galloping horsemen supposed to be escorting us were generally *nowhere*. It is only by sheer hard driving, pell-mell and helter-skelter, from stage to stage of the exposed road, that the mail escapes plunder along this dangerous bit of it, and that not always (*vide* my Journals for 1855, '59, '60, and '63 to 1866.)^{*}

^{*} P.S.—Reporting on these mail cart robberies at a subsequent date, and of some further instances of them, I find the remarkable ground thus also described by me: "I do not think that any other than robbers in actual possession of the ground, can well be the perpetrators of any of the cases which occurred on the mail line after it crosses the *Chumbul* River at *Dholepore*, and

17th March, Morár, 38 miles, Sunday.—I got here at 7 p.m. yesterday, and am Colonel Daly's

passes into Gwalior territory. The nature of the difficult country leads me to this opinion, and it can best be understood by supposing the road traversed, to lie along an elevated viaduct running across and atop of a succession of inverted bowls of various sizes, or high across a track intersected by crooked fissures, or distorted by deep and serrated chasms, the intricacies of which are plentifully, if not solely, occupied by a class of people, who are not only intimately acquainted with all their local windings, but are themselves predatory—the well-known tribe of *Goozurs*, so notorious for turbulence and as the most intrepid thieves and robbers. The road which courses this wild region for some miles beyond the Chumbul in the direction of Gwalior, is high and narrow, with precipitous banks on either side descending at once into the labyrinths I describe; and it may readily be conceived how difficult it would be for any *strangers* to pass into such a region for the purpose of robbery, with any hope of escaping through defiles so occupied, without being deprived of their booty, or of disentangling themselves from such broken ground, possessed as it was by a people ever on the look out for a prey! There is not a more difficult country in the world, and the mail robberies on that particular length of postal line, cannot readily be committed by any other plunderers than by the *Goozurs* who inhabit it, or by *Bhinds* who occupy the same region at no great distance beyond them. No outside robbers could cut across such a country; and if they should come on to the road by either end of it, for the express purpose of lying in wait for the mails, they could not fail to be perceived, whether in coming or escaping, by the *Goozur* and other Chowkeedars of the road police numerous supplied by the Maharajah Scindiah, and posted on almost every eminence of the dangerous defile. I myself travelled along this road by the night mail cart in both directions, immediately after the two recent mail attacks upon it. The mail cart driver pointed out to me the spot, and showed me how on the first occasion he drove right through the dacoits and thus saved his mails, and how two months later the mail cart was again waylaid close to that very spot and the mails successfully robbed! It was thought, from some empty mail bags being found in Dholepore territory on the latter occasion, that outside robbers must have been concerned; but I was informed by the driver of the cart, a Punjab man, that this was so declared in view to avoid payment of compensation for the robbery, on the pretext of the *Khój* being carried out of the territory in which the offence took place (that is, to cast both the odium and the fine on *Dhole-*

guest in the Residency bungalow, situated on the other side of the nullah separating it from the cantonments of Morár. He is at present Resident, or rather Political Agent, at the Court of Seindiah, the Sovereign of Gwalior. A heavy post awaited me here.—After dinner I went across to the
Personal. Officers' quarters of the 103rd Foot (to which regiment I myself was posted, but exchanged from before joining, at which time it was designated the "First Bombay European Regiment, Fusiliers,") and there I surprised Hugh in his subaltern's "kennel." He had no idea of my coming. I had not seen him for eleven years, when he was a boy at school at Hampstead. He is thin and looks delicate.

With Daly to the Cantonment Church in the afternoon. The lad both breakfasted and dined with us to-day.

Personal. 18th March, Morar.—Both the Colonel and the Doctor of the 103rd, spoke of the boy's delicate health, the latter saying it was his intention to have him sent with the drafts of the season to the

pore instead of upon *Gwalior*;) for (he added) it was very generally locally believed that the *Goozurs* of a noted robber village situated in the tortuous ravines below the scene of the robbery, the site of which he even pointed out to me, were the real perpetrators, *with the connivance, too, of the road Chowkeedars themselves*—those wild-looking men who, with long spear or matchlock, suddenly stood out of some shadowed recess, or atop of some dark nook on the hill side where they watched, muffled up, as the mail cart dashed along—these posts of half friend, half foe, existing at every mile or so of the long gallop, and quite as far as the next river, the *Koodree*. Beyond that point the country, though more open, is still difficult—such ground as the battle-fields of 'Punniar' on that side, or of 'Maharajpore,' on this side of Gwalior."

Sanitorium Hill Station of Kussowlie, situated on the road up to Simlah. So I am to carry him away with me, at which he is in high delight, but there is a *proviso*—he promises to study for the “higher standard” examination in Hindostani during his sojourn with us, in view to nomination to the Staff Corps. He is well spoken of.

The Khaikáree women not unfrequently emulate their men. A few evenings back some eight or nine of them seated themselves under a tree on the road near the railway station of *Khāndwah* in the Central Provinces, on the look out for a man they had seen daily passing that way. The hour late, the way wild, they followed him, and presently they fell upon and deprived him of a lot of ornaments he was conveying to his village further on, in value about 400 rupees. For he was a journeyman goldsmith, and had been at work in the town, taking small repairs. A companion coming up, the two together managed to arrest the women, but the plunder had been carried off by one of their party. A Khaikáree *Tánda* or encampment was in the neighbourhood. It was searched, and a quantity of supposed stolen articles was found in it, as well as some, “*it is thought,*” of the things just plundered.¹

Accompanied Daly in the evening on a visit to

Robbery
by
Khaikáree
Females.

Visit
the Maha-
rajah
Scindiah.

¹ P.S.—Some of the women were found to be *the wives of some of our Approvers*. They preferred remaining with their people abroad, to joining their husbands serving Government. They were finally sentenced to imprisonment for short periods as “vagrabonds” only, not as plunderers.

in his new palace in the "Chownee" or cantonments of his own disciplined body of troops. Sentinels with drawn swords paced about his courts. Armed men stood in groups at the angles of the lofty corridors. Military silence reigned throughout the halls and palace precincts. At the gate a military guard turned out to salute us as we dismounted. This was done with the same precision and formality as by a guard of our own troops, the Mahratta officers dropping their swords in like manner. There was a military air, a sense of a military presence of the utmost exactitude, an exacting *sic volo* in every arrangement, in every preparation about the place. Not any *aping*—no senseless mimicry—for every thing was well done. If we were copied, ourselves were but the *replica*, our own reflections reflected by what we saw—all admirably managed, although said to be only the *plaything* rather than the ambition of the not unambitious and certainly jealous Monarch by whom all was thus ordered and maintained. All this acts as a standing menace, and there was necessity for the presence here closé by, of the brigade of our own troops posted in the neighbouring cantonments of Morár. A dividing nullah only, exists between the two bodies, and the more numerous force of the wily Mahratta may demand to be marched against ours, and any morning be found to be so! I had often seen the Maharajah before. On being now introduced to him by Daly, he seemed to know all about our work. He has not always been very friendly disposed towards it—

The Maharajah's
Troops or
"Lushkar," a
Standing
Menace.

but such has been his general attitude in all matters towards the British Sovereignty. Although sensible enough to know that he is powerful to no end, reinstated, as indeed he was, by ourselves during the Mutiny, when his own people had fallen away from him and the famed "Gwalior Contingent" revolted, he seems to think that we exact too much. To counteract that ill effect we allow him his hobby—to *play at soldiers*—and this he does so well that it is now a consideration whether he should not be required to reduce his forces! This would cause him great chagrin, and be regarded as a great humiliation, and 'twere more politic not to make that a moot point, as some are disposed to advocate, but rather to go on humour-^{The}ing his whim. So I spoke to him in *Mahratta*, his own tongue. This surprised him, and inclined him towards me. I spoke of his troops, their precision, his own genius—how plain it was that it was *he* who ruled, and was both "Lord Sahib" and "Commander-in-Chief" everywhere, (for he loves our military titles and distinctions—he worships our organization, though I think, hating us all the while.) Having made some way in this manner, to his inquiry I remarked my business to his capital was a short one—simple of accomplishment—the word had only to be said by him and the thing was done—thus did the Magicians of old:—I wanted His Highness to cause the arrest of the men who had slain my people, and had got away to *Bhind*.—"Where?" "*Bhind*." The Maharajah has an impediment in his speech. He

The
Interview.

repeats that word after many beginnings and attempts to begin it, and says, "Why, that is our territory, and a rascally place it is," (astutely, as though he now only remembered it.) "Yes, Maharajah, and that equally applies to the people there."—"It shall be so no longer. I will despatch troops to rout out the rebels. Are you able, Colonel Sahib, to appoint a trustworthy man to superintend the quest?" I replied I would do so at once, and with this we took our leave. The Maharajah, who is burly in person, sat, *sui generis*, cross-legged (tailor-wise,) as he spoke, in a somewhat lofty chair, occasionally up-lifting a knee as their manner is, and stammering a good deal. Daly gets on with him, and is, I think, more in his confidence than any previous Resident. There was a conciliatory familiarity in their intercourse, so equally balanced, that it would seem he was quite a *persona grata* with His Highness.²

Colonel
Henry
Daly.

Mahrattas The *Mahrattas*, although originally Rajpoots of a sort, sprung from the ancient race of Rháttores of Canouj, who on their subversion by the Mahomedan invaders, dispersed into Rajpootanah and the countries beyond it (*vide* p. 231,) and consanguineous with the Rháttores properly so called, as exemplified by the affixes to their names, of *Púar*, *Chóhán*, *Dhobéy*, *Jádow*, etc., indicative of their original tribal distinctions, do not get on very well with the locally born Rajpoot fraternity of the present day. They are, indeed, hated by

² Regarding the Bedowreahs and their *habitat* in connection with the Kooa-Khêra incident, *vide* Appendix A.

it as usurpers of the country. Hence there is often open defiance between them.³ But Scindiah has a strong hand, and he is stern in his resolves when he chooses, or is pushed to exert himself. Whether the term "Mahratta" proceeds from *Mahārāshtra*, the name of Mahratta-land, or may, as I am disposed to think, be an abbreviation of "Māhā-Rhātore," or the great or renowned *Rhātore*s, as no doubt the original emigrants to that distant country proudly gave themselves out to be, is, I believe, an unsettled point. But, by the irony of events, *Sivajee*, the founder of the Mahratta Empire and descendant of the great *Seoji*, the first Rhātore Ruler of Mārwar (after dispersion from Canouj,) conquered *Delhi* from the Mahomedans with his small Deccani Mahrattas (small of stature by intermarriage of the original stock with the women of the country which they had invaded;) and certain it is, that the little Mahratta has been found to be equal for fighting qualities to the big Rhātore. For their former plundering habits they used to be designated *Moof Khôr*, or "franked guests," subsisting by plundering others;

³ Post Scriptum, 1889 : The above statement scarcely needed confirmation, but it is satisfactory to be supported in it by an observer and authority like Sir Lepel Griffin, sometime agent to the Governor-General for the Central India States (in succession to Sir Henry Daly and Sir Richard Meade,) who, in a recent communication to the *Times*, is reported to have said, among other pieces of useful information regarding Native States generally, that "Scindiah and Holkur were detested by the Rajpoot gentry they had overwhelmed, and whom they still daily persecuted" This going on twenty-one years after my own mention of it! (*Times*, 19th June, 1889.)

Free Lances, like the *Pindárees*, who were largely composed of them.

I have selected a couple of reliable men for the duty of the detection I am bent upon. Both are themselves *Bedowreaks*, and I have telegraphed orders that they proceed to Kerowlie at once for my instructions.

Personal.

Dined at evening at the mess of the 103rd, as the guest of Dr. Frazer, in medical charge of the regiment. He has placed the lad in "sick quarters," preparatory to his appearing before a Medical Board. Am asked by Colonel Furneaux and the Officers of the regiment, to be an honorary member of their mess. They all speak very pleasantly of Hugh. His *chum* in the regiment is a son of *Colonel Neil*, the hero in the relief of Lucknow, a promising young fellow of his own standing.⁴

19th March, Morár.—Coleridge replies to my reference about *Khôj Rules* (*vide* p. 314,) that the authorities of other States when "*Khôj*" was carried into their districts, made the recent alteration in the rules *an excuse for not carrying it on*. It involved, too, much more trouble in procuring evidence, and much less property had in con-

⁴ Post Scriptum (1888:) Young Neil rose to be a major, and to the command of one of the excellent regiments of the "Central India Horse." He was lately shot dead by one of his troopers on the parade-ground. I remember a similar case of the murder at Jalnah by a trooper of the 5th Madras Cavalry, of the adjutant of that corps, Lieutenant Johnstone, who had offended the man that morning on parade. I was at Addiscombe with the latter officer. While there he obtained a direct cavalry cadetship—and had but recently married when the murder was committed.

sequence been recovered than formerly. He was forwarding to me the man *Láká*, required in the *Rhôtuck* parcel van robbery case (*vide* p. 310.) Dacoities, he adds, "are, as usual, becoming more rife as the warm weather comes on. One was committed last evening only eight koss from this (Bikaneer,) three camels and about 500 rupees worth of property taken away, and four men severely wounded by a party of ten men on camels. My people are after them. As to the state of Shekawátie, it is getting worse and worse."—Can this case be identical with that the rumour of which we had lately heard? (*vide* p. 252.)

Robbery
near
Bikaneer.

To-day is the great day of the *Hôli* festival. Th It is being celebrated with great clamour at the ^{Hô} capital hard by (Gwalior,) and the excitement among Hindoos is very great. The liberties taken in these *Saturnalia* are unbounded. The Maharajah himself is not spared from the general mutual squirting of coloured liquids and pelting of red powder that go on. Visitors to the city, or wherever there is a *Hôli* procession, return with soiled cloths; and the obscenities are so excessive, that no decent female dare appear out of doors. The noise of *tom-tomming*, and of shouting and singing, resounds throughout the plain, and, hot as it is, the natives disport in every direction, leaping and crying out as though be-maddened.

Called during the day on several acquaintances in the cantonments, among them upon *Major Jenkins*, the commandant of the Irregular Horse here posted. ^{Morár} ^{Canton-} ^{ments.} Morár is the most unpopular station

of the Bengal army, not only for its position in an unsheltered and unhealthy plain, but also for the great heat so unfavourable to the location of European troops, who, notwithstanding the fine new barracks which have been here constructed for them, suffer much from it. There is also a sense of restiveness at the monotonous and inglorious occupation of watching, in such a climate, the mimic war manœuvres daily exercised on the other side of the demarking line between them.—“Let Scindiah come and have it out with us, and be done with it !”

Treaty
with
Gwalior.

The subordinate co-operation of this State (*Gwalior*), in the general measures of security, is more implied than it is secured in so many words. Being recognized as one of full sovereignty, the Ruler has always exhibited an unwillingness to co-operate (except in a rare instance,) with the designs of the British Government for the suppression of crime, and has seldom done more than give a reluctant acquiescence in the arrest of robbers and murderers of whom the territory has notoriously been an abiding place (*vide* footnote, p. 370, or Appendix A.) But by the *tenor* of its engagements, it is in a degree prohibited to this Court to harbour or protect freebooters, and obligatory to expel them from their haunts, and to adopt effectual steps to disperse them and prevent their reassembling ; or, as it may be put, not to admit any predatory tribes into the territory, or to give them the smallest countenance or support, but to *drive out or destroy them*, and prevent any revival

of the system. They congregate in it, nevertheless !

20th March, Morár.—Out at an early hour to the review of the 16th Irregular Cavalry, a fine corps and of grand *physique*, but somewhat under-mounted, I thought. At least the horses should be as good as the men in a cavalry regiment, if not (as some prefer) *better*. Long jack-boots hanging down the sides of under-sized nags do not prepossess.—The boy passed the Board this morning, and has obtained six months' leave to Simlah. Personal.

We have fuller particulars as to the recent dacoitie at *Arneea* (*vide* p. 288.) That place is situated on the boundary of *Meywár*, where the interlying district of *Nimbhaira* abuts upon that Province. *Nimbhaira* belongs to the Mahomedan *Tonk* principality, and another similarly inter-situated district adjacent to it, called *Jáwul-Neemuch*, is an outlying dependency belonging to Scindiah, and *both* are the habitation of *Môghya* dacoits, the special *protégés* of the local officials thereof, who are too far removed from their respective capitals of *Tonk* and *Gwalior*, to be overlooked from there, or to be at all afraid even if they were, the distance obscuring their practices, and *douceurs* being ready to hand to weaken any evidence thereof.⁵ A considerable consignment of

⁵ P.S.—Bishop Heber's account of this place and district, is a description thereof to the present day: "*Neemhaira* and the district round it, containing 275 villages, and yielding a revenue, I was told by the town people, of three lacs of rupees, form a part of the Jaghire of Ameer Khan's (Nawáb of Tonk.) . . . It is administered by a Mussulman officer of his, under the title of

bullion and specie in *silver brick* and *reals*, to the extent, it is said, of 32,000 rupees, had been sent from *Mundisore*, in *Málwa*, for conveyance to *Chittoregurh*, in *Meywar* (*Rajpootanah*,) laden upon four camels. It was under an escort of eight armed men, that is, of two men riding upon each camel, and had arrived in safety as far as our own military cantonments at *Neemuch*. When it had gone on and reached a nullah close to *Arneea*, it was set upon by a band of thirty or more *Môghyas*, mounted on camels (two men upon each,) and some on horseback. They had posted themselves in ambush among some trees, and from there they fired upon the convoy as it passed along the bend of a nullah. Two of the escort were shot dead and two others severely wounded. The robbers then drove away the four camels to a spot where they had posted some of their own, to which they thereupon transferred the plunder and got clear away with it. The hour of the robbery was between four and five o'clock of the evening. It is believed that some of the dacoits were wounded on their part, for they were resisted by the escort;⁶ and

'Moonshee.' . . . Not even Swabia, or the Palatinate, can offer a more chequered picture of interlaced sovereignties" (than here presented—Tonk, Scindiah, Meywar.) "Never was an arrangement better calculated to ensure protection and impunity to robbers." (Chapter xxiv., volume ii. of "Heber's Journey.")

⁶ P.S.—The leader of the gang, named *Girdháree*, whom I afterwards admitted to Approvership, received a sword cut on a hand. There were two *Chowkies* or watch-posts near the spot of the robbery, occupied each by six or seven horsemen, one at *Arneea* in *Meywar* and the other at *Nimbhaira* in *Tonk* ground. These men cried out and shouted a good deal, but none of them went to the assistance of the attacked convoy. A few *Bheels*,

the robbers when pursued successfully resisted the constituted police of the territory. The Report of this case says : " The Môghyas are daily gaining head. Formerly they committed their excesses under cover of the night, but now, trusting to the support they receive from the local officials, they undertake to do so in daylight. We have yet to see what more they will do." Blair also writes of the " trouble " they occasion. Many years ago (before my time,) they were, as before remarked (p. 277,) included in our general suppression operations, and for a time were successfully proceeded against. At that period the Thuggee Department had branch agencies at *Nusseerabad* and *Neemuch*, both in Môghya neighbourhood, and at *Indore*, each under a distinct Assistant General-Superintendent, at commanding positions in respect to this tribe, other assistance co-operating from *Agra*, *Meerut*, and *Gwalior*, as against two only now—namely, Blair at Aboo for Rajpootanah, and Thompson at Indore for the Central India States. Many Môghya dacoits were, on that previous occasion, convicted and sentenced, and the tribe generally was so overawed as to desist from the crime. But the several special offices mentioned were abandoned consequent on the Mutiny, and had, prior to my accession as General-Superintendent, been withdrawn

with bows and arrows, were, it was said, of the gang; also three Sepoys of the Ráj, *lent for the occasion by the Hákim of Nimbhaira*, on the well-known understanding to hand over a *Chowth*, or fourth of the booty, "*for the Ráj*." This was duly attended to on the division of the plunder, three parts only of it being retained by the robbers.

from those prominent positions, and, under the orders of the Government of India, been centred in a single one at remote Agra, since abolished, and the two at Indore and Aboo created only later on,—whereupon the Môghyas again broke out, and have now once more become notorious as bold and desperate plunderers (*vide* pp. 165, 277, 288;) and no wonder, since their examplers, the nearer *Meenas*, had also done so ! This reduction of and withdrawal from those centres and *points-d'appui*, were scarcely advisable, but they were advocated on the ground of economy and followed upon the general changes everywhere resulting from the Mutiny. The few men admitted from the tribe as Government Approvers in the previous operations, were mostly set at liberty by my predecessor, on their furnishing security; and the few who were retained, are at this date useless for proceedings against the newly-formed gangs. Most of the records, too, of the previous operations, were destroyed in the general subversion occasioned by the Mutiny. We must try to search out or recover through their “sureties” (myths,) one or two of the former Approvers, particularly one named *Nâhurrya*, who *escaped* from the department and is stated to have reverted to dacoitie:—he is the brother-in-law (sister’s husband,) of the leader on the present occasion, named *Girdáree Jemadar*. New hands from the fresh gangs are also necessary. The re-establishment, too, of an agency at *Neemuch* must also be advocated. Blair writes, “Under your directions efforts are being made to commence

the new operations against the Môghyas, in view to their suppression ;" that "in the three districts around *Neemuch* belonging to *Scindiah*, *Meywar*, and *Tonk*, the tribe had rendered themselves notorious for their depredations," and that merchants and the people generally "were loud in their complaints as to the losses caused by these freebooters;" also that the local officials of the three States indicated "accuse each other for not holding the tribe in check, if not of harbouring them, the truth being that all are to blame, each striving to cast the responsibility on his neighbours."

21st March, Delhi.—This distance, 197 miles, was well done in nineteen hours from *Morár*. We left Daly's house at a quarter-past three p.m. yesterday by carriage dák, kindly provided by the Mahárána of Dhôlepore. The road lay through the scene of the battle fought at Maharájpore in 1842, and passed close by the tomb, conspicuous in the moonlight, of *Colonel Crommelin*, of the Bengal Cavalry, one of those who fell on that occasion. Hugh was much impressed by the wild rugged intricacies of the country on either side of the road as we approached the Chumbul, villainous nullahs twisting with craggy contortions into each other, and wild to a degree (*vide* p. 363 and footnote p. 364.) We got to *Dholepore* at half-past nine, a salute being taken up by the Fort directly we had crossed the bridge of boats, and continued till we had reached the Rajah's Guest-House, the smoke from the guns creating in the moonlight an impos-

Carriage
Dák ride
from
Gwalior
to
Dholepore
and Agra.

ing effect as it curled up and gathered about the lofty ramparts at each successive report. At the bungalow deputies from the Rajah awaited us with kind messages to stay a few days. A table, too, was invitingly spread with food, but we were anxious to push on, so as to reach *Agra* in time for the night train from Calcutta. So, content with some tea only, and a comfortable *Dák Gháree*, or palanquin carriage, being in readiness for us in which we were able to lie at full length, we change into it and go on under a brilliant moon which in her plenitude illumines the entire region, and "in her pale dominion checks the night."

Night
Scenery.

It was the night for *burning the Hôli*, the last tumultuous ceremony of that great Hindoo carnival, and the uncertain flare and blaze of bonfires from every village, numerous scattered throughout the vast and now open plain, quaintly marked the scenery in their struggle to contend with the more effectual gleam of the full moon that bathed the entire face of the country, revealing it as though it were daylight. We were greatly interested; the shouting and the carolling of the revellers, near and in the far distance, now swelling and resounding, now waning into faintness as we swiftly passed on, adding to an idea and a sense of a flitting, on our part, through some mystic realm at once suggestive of the notion and unfolding the conceit of it as we sped along, *forging*

"Illusions, phantasms, and dreams."

night was warm, and by-and-by sleepiness

prevailed, good for the ailing lad, yet I awoke him to view the witchery of the scene, as, sixty miles from our starting-place, we neared *Agra*, spread out under the moon-beams like some villa-adorned Italian landscape. Rapidly sweeping through the extensive cantonments, dotted with bungalows each within its own *parterre* of garden and foliage, and, in the stillness of the early hour, close under the majestic dark-red battlements of the Fort, looking grandly imposing and spectral in the flood of the big moon's "borrowed light" (to borrow Milton once more,) all hushed in the same deep silence, the beautiful *Táj* with her fairy-like minarets decked in silvery sheen, hallowing with her supreme loveliness the opposite bank, we crossed the *Jumna* by another bridge of boats, and finally reached the railway station at half-past 2 a.m., a full half-hour before the arrival of the Calcutta night train ! This presently ran in, and in it we soon comfortably deposited ourselves and went on. Changing at *Toondla Junction*, we reached *Allighur* at about 7 a.m., where we had some tea, and the lad some breakfast, finally arriving at *Delhi* at ten o'clock in the forenoon. My office, which had preceded me, had already arrived there, and the members of it were duly at their work when I suddenly came in among them in my standing camp, pitched in the Metcalfe estate.—I had given no notice of Hugh being with me ; the attempt, however, to introduce him as a guest—"a railway acquaintance asked in for some breakfast"—signally failed. What mattered his ten years' absence at

Agra by Night.

By
Railway
from
Agra to Delhi.

Personal.

home?—he was quickly *detected* by his mother! Leaving them together in the Fort, where she was staying on a visit, I hurried back to my tents to open a heavy post-bag.

Have to-day specially commissioned a Duffedar named *Moonah Sing*, himself a *Bedowreah*—a fine tall fellow of stern demeanour—to the duty to search out and apprehend the *leader* more particularly, of the gang by whom our men were murdered at Kooa-Khêra, sent information thereof to the Political Officers for Kerowlie, Dholepore, Bhurtpore, and Gwalior, and to our Assistants for Rajpootanah and the Central India States. He was to endeavour to effect the desired capture, in communication with the Political Officers named, and with the aid and co-operation afforded by the Rulers of those States.

22nd March, camp at Delhi.—I took Hugh out early this morning to the ridge overlooking the city, and showed him over the various positions upon it of our besieging force in the year of the Mutiny, and over the graveyard beyond it, bestrewed to repletion with the tombstones and the grave pits of the officers and men who numerously fell during the famous siege. At the tomb of young *Quentin Battye*, of the Bengal Irregular Cavalry, killed at one of the gates of the city after the storm had been delivered, we read the epitaph inscribed upon it: “*Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori*,” words which the youthful hero had uttered on being mortally wounded. We also stood by the grave of our relative, *Sir Henry Barnard*, who died

Tomb of
Quentin
Battye.

of cholera while in command of the besieging troops, and was buried inside of his tent, and as we returned from the long walk, we also visited the fine railed-in tomb of *General Nicholson*, killed the day after the storm in which he had taken so glorious a part. It is situated in the cemetery outside of the Cashmere Gate of the Fort. In the afternoon of the very hot day, mother and son left for Simlah, each in a *Dák Gháree*, made as comfortable as heat and dust would admit.

Of General
Nicholson.

At evening was at a picnic in the *Rôshuára Picnic Gardens* outside of Delhi, given by the European community of Delhi to . . . , the popular local Civil Surgeon and his Bride, both recently returned. The reception was held in a beautiful building, one of those by which the neighbourhood of Delhi is crowded, covering a Saint's Tomb, where, and about the place generally, mottoes suggested by the guests' name, were plentifully posted about, of which one, "In for a penny in for a pound," however suitable as it indeed was in one sense on the present occasion, the "pound" being, by general assent, worth its weight in gold,⁷ conveyed the pleasantry

⁷ P.S.—To speculate from where this expression, "worth his or her weight in gold," as common among us as to liken one to a brick or a trump card, can have been derived—can it have been from the ancient Hindoo requirement, possibly thence in *Druidical* England also, of a sacrifice proportionate to the boon which a man wished to obtain, or an evil (sometimes the forfeit of his life,) which he laboured to avert, the highest and most effectual of such rich offerings being, the amount of the sacrificer's own weight in gold, whether in nuggets (ingots) or in golden cows, horses, elephants, etc. ? These offerings were called *Dáns* (literally gifts,) and were both propitiatory and expiatory ; and we read of them that the chiefest and most efficacious among

Use of Old
Tombs.

conceivable of its other less flattering suggestion, "Pennywise poundfoolish." Dancing soon followed in the same building, and supper *al fresco* without it.

There was no desecration in this in a very general opinion, the place having, like the similar shrines numerous scattered throughout the neighbourhood, been long in disuse for devotional purposes, and the practice of converting them to dwelling and other requirements, a very general one on the part of the inhabitants themselves, both Hindoos and Mahomedans, and not any the more therefore on our own. The sentiment is, however, to be respected that it is no criterion of the reasonableness of a common habit, that no evil had come out of it, to say nothing of the evil feeling

them was, for the devotee *to weigh himself against gold*, and present the amount to the officiating Brahmin priest as oblation, whether in hope of a blessing to be procured or compound for some heinous sin, and that by such *dān* when a man gave away *his own weight in pure gold*, he was guaranteed to remain in "Paradise" (lit: *Pur-dēsh*, i.e. another region world,) for a period of one hundred million *kulps* or periods of Brahma, whatever they may be—perhaps cycles?—and further that when he returns to and resumes his human form, it will be as some mighty Monarch!—"Women's Rights" must, men may suppose, secure the same advantages to the opposite sex, "not chiefly bought for thrice their weight in gold," and make women then indeed "beautiful for ever," when similarly balancing herself against the precious metal—despite thy withering sarcasm outrageous Mr. Pope—*pace thy manes!* But independently of this, it became a practice in more recent times, for the Emperor of Persian descent to present gold and silver coins among their courtiers, on the occasion of the *Nowroz* or New Year's Day, and this, later on gave birth to the annual ceremony of *weighing the Mogul against gold and silver*, as indicative of his worth ("weighed in the balances" and not found wanting?) as described by Sir Thomas Roe, Queen Elizabeth's Ambassador to the Court of Délihi.

adoption was likely to occasion. "Spare their holy places," replied mortally wounded Sir Henry Lawrence, to a proposition to bombard a certain mosque where the mutineers had shelter, and which they had used to fire from during the beleaguering of the Lucknow Residency. I incline to that feeling.

23rd March, camp at Delhi.—A storm during the night. Great heat throughout the day, and I abed till the afternoon with a bilious headache.

Wrote to Captain Berkeley, at present our assistant at Indore (about to be relieved by Major Thompson,) in respect to the two men, *Khêma Mōghya* and *Hurgoolal Maistree*, both in custody for the recent opium dacoitie in the Simrôle Ghat (*vide* p. 165,) to keep a sharp look out on his office employés, that nothing may happen to *spoil the case*, the prisoners and their associates having the amplest means (*Hurgoolal*, their general receiver, particularly,) to swamp all our endeavours by means of bribes :—"Pray therefore examine every witness yourself personally. Keep every document connected with the case in your own box, under lock and key, and do your best to enable me to take up these new operations with the same success we have been conducting them against the *Meenas*, and previously did against the *Khaikárees* and the *Khunjurs*, and are now directing against the present generation of the latter tribe, who, too had been similarly neglected as these *Mōghyas* have been ; and pray write to me at all times very freely and fully about them. Perhaps *Khêma* will

Mōghya is in the matter of the () in the Dacoity in the Simrôle Pass, near Indore.

turn approver. By skilful angling you may lead him to do so."

The
Kootub
Minár
struck by
Lightning.

24th March, Sunday; camp at Delhi.—A fierce thunder-storm last night, preceded by a whirlwind of dust, so terribly convulsing the tents, that "but for their having been previously *bushed*, they must have been blown down. The *Kootub Minár* was struck by the lightning, and has been badly damaged, but happily not that part of the structure which, sheathed with streaked white marble, gives the pillar an appearance of towering among the clouds.

The
Môghya
Tribe.

Have been looking up the but fragmentary records to be found in the office regarding the *Môghyas*. These people are called *Bowries* or *Bowreas* when located in Márwár, and *Môghyas* in Meywar and Malwa, and they belong to and have sprung from the same common stock as the *Budhucks*, *Khunjurs*, and other affined plundering tribes of like habits, being variously designated according to the regions they inhabit or infest. Their common occupation is to act as *Chowkey-dárs* or village watchmen,^s a service on the part

The
Tribal
Divisions
of the
Môghyas.

^s P.S.—*Sansyas*, *Sansees*, *Sancers*, *Bowries*, *Budhucks*, *Kee-chucks*, *Khunjurs*, *Môghyas*, *Hárbooras*, *Geedseas*, *Shigál-khórs* (jackal-eaters,) *Soour-khowas* (eaters of pig-flesh,) *Murours* (feeders on carrion,) and *Táinkárs*, are some of the names by which they are locally distinguished. All have a common language, are divided into the same sub-classes, have the same customs, rites, and observances, and however low their position in the estimation of other Hindoo communities, they preserve the same caste prejudices, distinctions, and rules of inter-marriage, which their forefathers originally established and observed. "We who follow Dacoitie as an exclusive profession" (stated in substance a dacoit of the tribe located in Kerowlie territory,) "came from Márwár originally,

of the thievish tribes very commonly recognized and accepted throughout India, on the well-known principle of "set a thief to catch a thief." My attention was first directed to the revival among the *Môghyas* as dacoits—if indeed they had ever desisted from dacoitie—on an occasion of information reaching me when travelling in Rajpootanah two years ago (1865,) of a barbarous act of the crime that had then recently taken place, on the high road between the military cantonments of *Neemuch* and *Nusseerabad*. I was provided with a copy of a letter on the subject, addressed by the

but when our ancestors emigrated I know not. *They were all Rajpoots*, and took exclusively to robbery for subsistence. The Rajpoots who remained in *Márwár*, called us *Bowries* in consequence; this is the name of our particular *clan*. Those of us who settled in *Meywar* got to be called *Môghyas*, from a service against some rebel *Bheels* which they had performed for a *Rajah* of that country, who declared they were as valuable to him as the *moongas* or coral beads on his necklace; while those who went off towards *Bhôpál* were called *Bágrees*. We all know each other, however little the intercourse between us. We are no longer Rajpoots, but to regulate our marriages we maintain among us the distinctions of the seven Rajpoot castes of *Chowhán*, *Sotunki*, *Puár*, etc. All our slang language (secret talk,) is the same throughout all our colonies, and we all intermarry, and when we hear each other talk we can always distinguish a genuine tribal Dacoit. *Bowries* were so named from the practice of an ancestor to lurk with his gang and take refuge in some old *bowrie* or reservoir. The name *Bágree* came from '*Bágur*,' the thorn desert from which they migrated, as well as from their habit, after dispersion, of encamping on *bágur*, that is, on desert spots or commons; *Budhucks* from their being *murderers*" (as the term signifies, just as *Cossack* is the synonym of '*Kuzzáak*' or *cut-throat*;) "and *Sánsees* from *Sains Mull*, the common progenitor of our race. We eat foxes, jackals, crocodiles, nay even snakes—in short, all animals *but cows*." Memo: The *bowries* above adverted to, are spacious stone wells or reservoirs of ancient construction, descended into by winding flights of steps leading down to intervening landings which demark the varying water-levels.

Story of a
Dacoitie
with
Murder by
Môghyas.

General Officer commanding the Mhow Division of the Army to the Agent Governor-General for Rajpootanah, enclosing a report from the Native Officer commanding one of the cavalry patrols maintained to preserve the communication between those two military stations. The account had all the indications of *Môghyas* being the perpetrators. The dacoitie had been committed upon a party of merchants of Rajpootanah, travelling from their places of business in our cantonments at Malligaum in Khandeish, to their homes in distant *Bikaneer*, with valuable personal property laden upon four camels. They were joined on the way by some others of their folk, travelling in like manner with property of the same valuable description—gold and silver articles, wearing apparel, household vessels, etc. The combined party consisted of fourteen persons and four camels, and all had, in the long journey, safely reached the point where the detached district of Nimbhaira, belonging to *Tonk*, touched the *Mewâr* frontier. On the evening of the 25th January they halted near a well close by a *chowkey* or local police post, situated in the limits of the latter territory, and they had scarcely done so when they were suddenly set upon by an armed band of dacoits. The travellers very courageously resisted the bandits, and it was only on three of their number being killed and six others wounded, that they yielded and suffered themselves to be plundered. The booty carried off on this occasion was valued at 15,700 rupees, and none of the

offenders had been apprehended. Two young military officers *en route* to join their regiment at *Mhow*, passed by the scene of the dacoitie on the morning after its occurrence, and they saw the bodies of the three slain men lying on the roadside. This outrage was succeeded by another in the following month of February; by another in May (the latter having been a double affair during the same night, and in which one of the dacoits was killed, and a dacoit and a villager wounded;) and by yet another case in June (two men of the plundered party being killed and one wounded—booty, 60,000 rupees,) *all on the same commingled frontier*. We have now information of fourteen similar acts of open depredation committed by Môghyas up to the present date, within the same short period and in the same complicated neighbourhood (with two exceptions which took place in *Málwah*, one of these being the opium robbery in the *Simrôle Ghat* near Indore—*vide* pp. 165 and 385,) and all more or less attended with loss of life and with wounding, the property plundered, except in three unsuccessful instances, being considerable. There is occasion therefore to have it out with these Môghyas, and I must go up to Government on the subject with a request to strengthen my hands, no effectual means having been adopted by the local authorities for checking the evil.

25th March; camp at Delhi.—The weather greatly cooled by the recent storm and now very pleasant. Rambled this morning along the Delhi Heights and suburbs, and over the site of the old

Old Cantonments
of Delhi.

cantonments situated below the ridge. Of these cantonments, so many years in occupation by our troops, no more than two or three buildings remain, the rest having been burnt down or destroyed in the Mutiny. The Sepoy lines shared the same fate, and only the sentry boxes and the several quarter-guard rooms, constructed as they were of solid masonry, remain standing. The same general conflagration took place in the quarter nearer to the Fort occupied by European officials in civil employ, except that it was notable that the bungalows which were the property of local Mahomedans, let out by them to the European community, were not meddled with, although plundered. The Metcalfe mansion was burnt; but "Ludlow Castle," occupied as the office of the Commissioner or British Agent, and in which a native had interest, was left untouched. (*Vide Journal*, 1863-64.)

Pro-
cedure by
means of
Roobe-
kárees or
Vernacu-
lar Pro-
ceedings.

26th March, camp at Delhi.—The weather has to-day turned back to very hot, but I still occupy my tents pitched in the Metcalfe estate. The day is consumed in office work, of which there is no cessation. The correspondence in the Persian Department is voluminous and never ceasing; for the habit is very general throughout Upper India (not so down Bombay or Madras,) of all official communications being certified and conveyed in *Roobekáries* or "vernacular proceedings," a copy of which, besides being separately referred to each one of the several public offices concerned, is added to each distinct *misl* or file of papers forming

the record of the particular case the said "proceedings" relate to. The convenience of this procedure is, that the "misl" or file—containing as this does every piece of information respecting the career of the man it purports to be a record of, from the time his name first cropped up in the operations of the special department, and of the several criminal acts imputed to him (each one of these being also recorded in its own distinct file,) up to the date of his capture and final committal for trial—is sent up to the judge or investigating authority, or can be sent for at any time for examination, and it thus becomes of great utility in a judicial investigation or inquiry. "Roobekáries" (literally signifying "proceedings *in propria personâ*,") are, in short, so many official communications conveyed in the language (*Urdu* in Upper India,) that is understood in the court of trial or investigation, the European officers concerned being supposed themselves to understand that language, or if not to be assisted to do so by their Sheristadárs or law officers, of whom there is always one to every court or cutcherry. The procedure multiplies labour in a manner; but it saves laborious research, every man's case, and the case of every act of crime attributed to him, comprising a separate or distinct and a comprehensive record; and it also *in a manner* diminishes the labour of the European head of an office, by its saving him from the necessity for the employment of several European clerks, always a serious additional expense to an office establish-

ment, as well as from the trouble of supervising their work also. Another advantage is that the procedure keeps all concerned, and the parties to a case more particularly, fully cognizant of the proceedings, while it at the same time promotes and sustains a more thorough acquaintance with the vernacular medium on the part of European officials, contributing thereby to their fuller knowledge of the people and the ways of the country, and, if the assertion be not too bold, to their greater intelligence—*Pace*, all those who cavil at the system! To be sure it may lead to abuse and too readily to habits of indolence, of leaving too much to native subordinates; but I combat the idea, and argue for that host of zealous European gentlemen of Bengal and Upper India—Magistrates, Mofussil Judges, Heads of Departments, and Police Officers, who will not condescend to such neglect of duty, or be unmindful of the risk of leaning too much on native agency. Their proper part is to control the organization under their charge:—all else follows, if they are heedful and are adequately assisted.

27th March, in tents at Delhi.—Being in arrears as to newspaper information, I have been wading to-day through an accumulation of journals delivered during my absence on tour.

Compensation for
Mail
Robberies
in Native
Territory.

A propos to my reference from Bikaneer on the subject of the new rules for compensation from native chiefs for mail robberies (*vide* pp. 133 and 162,) I find it stated, in the *Times of India*, on the ground of the objection raised by *Scindiah* to that arrangement (p. 248,) that if the rules are

inapplicable or unsuited to the purpose they are intended to serve, *it would be better to re-cast them altogether* than to modify them as had been pressed by that Ruler, uniform action in suppression of the evil being what was sought for (*vide* pp. 248 and 318.)

We now have information of a renewed attack of the same kind. A wagonette conveying the Parcel Post Robbery. Bhangy Parcel Dák was plundered, and the drivers severely beaten, a few nights ago near *Mungôwa*, while running from Mirzapore to Jubbulpore, within the territory of the ruler of *Rewah*!

I send out notices from our Diary of Intelligence, Meenab Gangs Exploiting. of the departure of several gangs, of *Meenas* more especially, on expeditions of dacoitie, of the directions they are supposed to have taken, and the names of the leaders, in view possibly to their interception.

28th March, tents at Delhi.—It has become so hot in tents, that I look about me where to move to.

Afzul Khán, a son of Dost Mahommed Khan, Afghan-istan. “Walee of Cabool and Candahar,” had recently defeated his brother, *Ameer Sheer Alli Khán*, the ruler of Affghanistán, and had followed up the victory by occupying Candahar. To his letter announcing the event, Sir John Lawrence has replied, that he was sorry for *Shere Alli*, but glad for the people generally of Affghanistan, who during the past three years had been a prey to the dissensions of the Baruckzye House (to which both brothers belonged,) and that on this ground he congratulated him and his son, *Abdool Rahman Khan*,

on the victory; that on his part, as Viceroy of India he had inclined to neither side; he had not, as had been commonly rumoured, given any assistance in men, arms or money to the defeated Ameer; that he had left them to fight out their battles on their own resources, and that he was resolved on observing a strict neutrality; that the relations of the British Government were with the *de facto* rulers of Affghanistán; that as long as *Shere Alli* held Herat and maintained friendship with the British Government, he would be recognized as the ruler of Herat and his amity be reciprocated; on the same principle would *Afzul Khan* be recognized as Ameer of Cabul and Candahar, who on his part must recognize as binding on his Government, the engagements concluded with the British Government by his father *Ameer Dost Mahomed*; and the Viceroy in conclusion pressed upon him, in the terms of those engagements, to admit an Agent at Cabool, "a Mahomedan gentleman of rank and character," to be the British representative or Vakeel at his Court, there having been none other than a mere Moonshee acting in that capacity, for the past three years, on the substantive Agent being recalled to India, "an arrangement which was never intended to be otherwise than temporary, and had been found inconvenient in practice.

Sir John
Lawrence

It is stated of Sir John Lawrence that he attends too much to details, initiates little, and forgets that men who differ from him in matters of policy, may, nevertheless, be valuable public servants; that he makes himself rather the Chief

Commissioner of India than Viceroy; that it had been often observed that a weak Peer made a better Governor in India, than a strong local civilian, and that a civilian Viceroy, from holding office in India before his appointment as such, was apt to regard those with whom he was acquainted in his previous contracted sphere, as the most deserving of advancement, forgetting that the men whom he does not know, in employment throughout his far wider range of government, may be, and usually were, very competent also.

29th March, in tents at Delhi.—My walk this morning was to the distant garden retreat of Sir David Ochterlony, situated beyond the old cantonments. It was a completely overgrown enclosure, walls broken down here and there, and the dwelling house in ruins. His old *Begum* still occasionally resides there; but her sole present revenue from the once flourishing and by general repute charming property, is from the Bère or jujube fruit the orchard abundantly supplies at this season, of a fine, large, and full-flavoured sort; and later on from the numerous mango trees on the estate. It is said the “*Begum*,” who was a well-born lady of the city, bore him two daughters, who were sent to England, but of whom she had heard no more. To set by this picture of altered times, I transcribe what was said of him in Bishop Heber’s journal: “Sir David Ochterlony, who, as Agent to the Governor-General, is the common arbitrator and referee in the disputes of these little sovereigns (Bhurtpore, etc.,) is said to maintain an almost

kingly state. His income from different sources is little less than 15,000 sicca rupees monthly, and he spends it almost all. Dr. Smith" (the Bishop's travelling medical attendant,) "in his late march from Mhow to Meerut, passed by Sir David's camp. The 'burra Sahib,' or great man, was merely travelling with his own family and personal followers from Delhi to Jyepore, but his retinue, including servants, escort, European and native aides-de-camp, and the various nondescripts of an Asiatic train, together with the apparatus of horses, elephants, and camels, the number of his tents, and the size of the enclosure hung round with red cloth, by which his own and his daughters' private tents were fenced in from the eyes of the profane, were what an European, or even an old Indian, whose experience had been confined to Bengal, would scarcely be brought to credit." Again: "In the way I had an opportunity of seeing some part of the magnificence which Dr. Smith had described, for we passed Sir David Ochterlony and his suite on his road to Bhurtpore. There certainly was a very considerable number of led horses; elephants, palanquins, and covered carriages, belonging chiefly, I apprehend (besides his own family,) to the families of his native servants. There was an escort of two companies of infantry, a troop of regular cavalry, and I should guess forty or fifty irregulars, on horse and foot, armed with spears and matchlocks of all possible forms; the string of camels was a very long one, and the whole procession was what

might pass in Europe for that of an Eastern prince travelling. Still, neither in number nor splendour did it at all equal my expectation. Sir David himself was in a carriage and four, and civilly got out to speak to me. He is a tall and pleasing-looking old man, but was so wrapped up in shawls, kincob, fur, and a Mogul fur cap, that his face was all that was visible. I was not sorry to have even this glimpse of an old officer whose exploits in India have been so distinguished. His history is a curious one. He is the son of an American gentleman, who lost his estate and country by his loyalty during the War of Separation. Sir David himself came out as a cadet, without friends, to India, and literally fought his way to notice. The most brilliant parts of his career were his defence of Delhi against the Mahratta army" (under Holkur, in 1804,) "and the conquest of Kemaon from the Ghoorkas. He is now considerably above seventy, infirm, and has often been advised to return to England. But he has been absent from thence fifty-four years; he has there neither friend nor relation, and he has been for many years habituated to Eastern habits and parade, and who can wonder that he clings to the only country in the world where he can feel himself at home?" (quoted from pages 362 and 392 of vol. ii. of Heber's "Journey from Calcutta to Bombay," 1824-25). A portrait of Sir David Ochterlony may be seen in the palaces of nearly every native chieftain. I lately saw one at Ulwur (*vide* p. 345.) He died

at Meerut on the 15th July, 1825, whither he had gone for a change of air, and he lies buried there, a fine mausoleum having been erected over his grave.* Later : It is good to roll on the memory, in all ways, of so fine a specimen of an Indian officer of the old time, and I here therefore subjoin an extract from the *in memoriam* General "Order the Governor-General of the period, Lord Amherst, issued on the occasion : "With the name of Sir David Ochterlony are associated many of the proudest recollections of the Bengal Army, and to the renown of splendid achievements he added, by the attainment of the highest honours of the military Order of the Bath, the singular felicity of opening to his gallant companions, an access to those tokens of royal favour which are the dearest objects of a soldier's ambition."

Frontier
Arrangements.

30th March, in tents at Delhi.—Am not feeling well to-day. The heat in tent life is always trying. Looking over Blair's report of the preceding year for the Rajpootanah circle, in connection with my late experience of Shekawatie, I observe that he stated of the territory : "In truth, throughout that tract of country, the restraint of public opinion in checking crime is entirely wanting. The dacoits are dacoits by birth and profession, and have been so for centuries past, regarding their trade with pride rather than shame." In

* A lofty column, well known as the "Ochterlony Monument," which I have ascended, was further erected to the deceased General's memory at Calcutta ; and a cenotaph at St. Paul's, or Westminster Abbey.

the arrangements made in the States comprising Blair's charge, consequent on the recent nomination of the several British political officers to be "Superintendents for the Suppression of Dacoity" within their respective circles, "in communication" with myself, native suppression officers (termed *Girráee*,) had been appointed by the several rulers, whose duty was "to report all cases of dacoity to the local British Political Agent, and to endeavour to track down the offenders"; and, in respect to Jeypore (where, it was stated, all measures of suppression "*touched the interests of the leading members of the community*,") a special force had been organized and placed under the appointed native dacoitie officer, the latter being in communication with the local British Political Agent, and with Blair as my own direct assistant. Of the efficiency of that force we may guess from the description of it given by the superintendent himself, Captain Nubbee Bux Khan (*vide* p. 310.) These several native "girráee" superintendents were expected to move about, to see that the duty of the local police was properly carried on, and, in cases of serious crime, to visit the spot and take immediate measures for the detection of the offenders, and collect evidence:—"Such measures, if only allowed a fair trial by the employment of honest and fearless native officials, cannot fail," thought Blair, "to result in the suppression of a large amount of violent crimes." But it is in obtaining *honest* officials that the great difficulty lies! On the system before described (p. 281,)

of levying blackmail on goods passing that way, and of attaching a *Buláhi* or guide to it (a kind of safe-conduct employé, who sees the convoy safely through the tract for which it has paid the demanded mulct—*vide* p. 333,) Blair added that the Thakoors, on whose account the impost was levied, “strictly respect each other’s *Buláhi*” (or *Buláwa*, called also *Buhtôt*), whereas merchants travelling with goods unprovided with such a safeguard, “are pretty sure to be fallen upon and plundered;” and that it was an arrangement among the plunderers that the attack take place on the borders of two States, by which to enable the officials of each to throw the blame of it on the subjects of the other, although *both* should have taken part in the outrage, to the end that compensation for the robbery should, when it was granted, fall on *two* rather than on *one* State! Whereof I have already noted an example (*vide* p. 287.) To remedy this state of things, Blair proposes that the three Durbars on the triple frontier of Shekawátie (*Jeypore, Márwár, and Bikaneer,*) be either led to put “a very severe pressure” on the Thakoors who levy blackmail, only to be effected with much trouble and expense, or to enlist them on the side of peace and order by entertaining them personally, and some of their followers, “as the police of the country, and holding them strictly responsible for any robbery that might occur.” He suggests to raise four small troops of horse, of about sixty sabres in each, commanded each by one of the four robber chieftains who levied black-

mail (*vide* p. 281.)¹ and an auxiliary foot police organized by ourselves and composed of Meenas under the chief Meena leaders infesting the same region, and to place all under *Coleridge*. This would be in a manner to reintroduce the element lost by the disbandment of *Forster's Shekawátie Force*. "Such a force would (I have replied,) be a valuable auxiliary to our own operations, by the extraneous help it would afford in running down plunderers—but unless employed (I added,) under specific instructions, and the restrictive and prohibitory rules by which our own special procedure was conducted, the measure would be foreign to the course prescribed for us."

31st March, Sunday, in tents at Delhi.—To church ^{The Church at Delhi.} in the afternoon. The edifice was built by the late Colonel Skinner, C.B., in fulfilment, it is said, of a vow made by him when lying wounded in one of the encounters he was engaged in when in the service of Scindiah, under whom he held important commands and fought several battles. This was before he "came over" to Lord Lake, with his contingent of horse and "galloper guns," and by his lordship was dubbed the "Black Prince," and held in great estimation for dashing activity

¹ When serving in the Scinde Irregular Horse (at a period prior to the conquest of Scinde,) a bevy of Belooch Horse similarly composed, and raised by myself from Amiel's disbanded lot, was attached to my command in Eastern Cutchee, through whose means we used to acquire information of the movements and of the meditated forays of mounted hill robbers into the plains patrolled by us; but they all were, more or less, in league with the marauders themselves, and kept them informed of our own movements and dispositions.

and soldiership. It is said that Colonel Skinner laid out quite 20,000 rupees towards the erection. It is situated within the city walls close to the Cashmeer Gate, and in the neighbourhood of his own fine mansion, now "Hamilton Hotel," and of the pretty mosque connected therewith, both also his constructions. He died at Delhi, and his remains were deposited within the church. It was commonly reported that they were dug out by the mutineers and cast about, and the grave desecrated, but this was, I believe, untrue. A fine marble cross, richly inlaid with mosaic work, erected by him in front of the church to the memory of his murdered friend, Mr. William Fraser, the British Agent at Delhi—the detection of whose murderer Skinner had himself skilfully worked out (*vide* p. 278)—was indeed thrown down and broken, and the ball and cross over the dome of the church much riddled with musket-shots by the rebels on the outbreak here of the great Mutiny, *but Skinner's grave was left untouched*, as was also a very beautiful marble tomb surrounded by a screen or perforated lattice-work of the purest white marble, in which lies interred the body of Sir Thomas Theophilus Metcalfe, a subsequent Delhi Commissioner, situated close outside of another entrance into the church. It is in the estate belonging to the latter greatly esteemed gentleman, that my tents are at this moment pitched. He was a brother of the late Sir Charles (Lord) Metcalfe, who was himself in high office at Delhi and took a prominent part in the settle-

ment of the territory, rising to that position, and even to officiate as Governor-General, from that of a mere Assistant Collector. A son of the latter, the present Colonel James Metcalfe, C.B., passed out from Addiscombe in the same term with myself. (P.S.—This officer has since died, 1888.)

1st April, in tents at Delhi.—Skinner's house was in the occupation of one of the mutinied regiments of native infantry when our troops appeared on the ridge, and it formed the principal rendezvous of the rebel captains during the siege of Delhi. It is now an hotel. I was there this morning to arrange for accommodation during the rest of my stay in the plains. I have a lot of work on hand—the most troublesome, and I may say the most irksome part of it, being just now the preparation for the Home Department of statistical returns of Dacoitie and Thuggee (by poisoning,) throughout the entire nine administrations in India, not reckoning *Burmah*, which lies out of my instructions.

Was dining at a large party last night at the Crawford Campbells', he the Executive Engineer of Delhi, and the lady a sister of Lieutenant Wimberley, lately my Assistant for Rajpootanah. The latter died two years ago at Jeypore, just before I had arrived there to meet him; a very intelligent officer and painstaking to a degree.

2nd April, Delhi.—My last day in tents; for I moved this morning to the "Hamilton Hotel" (Skinner's house,) so called after Colonel Hamilton, the present Commissioner of Delhi, than

Skinner's
House at
Delhi.

The Late
Lieutenant
Wimberley.

Colonel
Hamilton.

whom not a cleverer official in India, and none abler. It was he who, as Captain Hamilton, specially appointed by Government to the unenviable duty, so very ably defended the *Dewan Moolráj* in his trial for treason and rebellion at Mooltan (*vide* Journal for 1849.) The hotel is under the management of a Mr. Rógers, a gentleman of colour, acting, I think, under a partnership. He is badly afflicted with gout. My servants have gone on to Simlah.

Bairána
Dacoitie.

We hear of a dacoitie committed a few nights ago, upon the house of the local *Patell* or village headman of *Bairána* in Boondée—value of the booty about 6000 rupees—the deed probably of one of the Meena 'gangs lately set out in that direction (*vide* p. 393,) particulars not to hand.

Old
Mahomedan
Lady.

3rd April, *Hamilton Hotel, Delhi*.—An old Mahomedan woman, wearing broad *pyjamas*, salaamed to me in so marked a manner in my walk this morning through the old cantonments, that I asked her who she was. She said she had lived with —, long retired, had been taken over by him when quite a girl, and had resided several years with him here at Delhi, and borne him two "*Missee Babas*," who both had died; that he retired a few years before the Mutiny, and left her very comfortably off; had given her a house in the Delhi cantonments, a palanquin, a lot of furniture, and other things, and that she was able to keep servants and all that; but that the mutineers ("*BUD-MAASH*" as she execrated them, *grindingly*.) burnt down her dwelling and

plundered everything she possessed, reducing her so miserably, that she was compelled to turn sempstress and take in repairs, and obliged, too, to walk—*trudge*—she who had been so daintily cared for—to the city every day with a bundle of clothes, and even to beg. She did not know where her old “*málik*” (lord) was, and it was no use to write to him—all the old *Sahibs*, too, of that time had passed away—what was she to do, etc. She went away well satisfied with my little present. This was but one of many similar instances of the olden time—*not now*.²

On the subject of the dacoitie near Sidhpoor in Guzerat, before adverted to (pages 205, 262, 334,) I have a communication from Baroda covering a Mahratta *yad* or memorandum from the Guicowar’s Government, illustrative of the importance of the office of a *Buláhi* (*vide* pages 333, 400.) The robbery was ascribed as an act of brigandage, as already stated, on the part of a

Sidhpoor
Dacoitie.

² There are some allusions to this habit of a bygone period, in Bishop Heber’s “Journey in India,” notably, I think, at page 324 of Volume I., where some palliation of it is given—of the prevalence of which *ways*, indications at the present day, may be conceived from certain *Kunnát* or high-walled enclosures attached to the rear of existing bungalows of the old type in some civil and military stations in Upper India. The term *Kunnát* properly applies to tent walls, but as these are also very commonly used for surrounding the Zenána or Ráwla precincts of native potentates when out in camp, the word got to be used comprehensively to denote similar more permanent enclosures in the sense indicated. If I should search for the Arabic derivation of the word, I think I might find *Kunnát* to mean anything to obstruct, to *screen*, what it is desired to conceal; and that it was from within the “*Kunnát*,” not tent, that Sarah spoke when she heard and “laughed.”

natural son of the Maharajah of Jodhpore (*vide* p. 334,) the convoy with the treasure, an escort of six armed retainers, being admittedly unaccompanied by any recognized *Buláhi* or official guide of the country, as was locally incumbent. It was at first approached by some robbers mounted upon a couple of camels (two men upon each,) who, *assuming* to be Customs police, made the pretence of accusing the escort with being themselves robbers, and with attempting "to slink away" without payment of the local custom dues:—"Pull up—you may not go on." Meanwhile eight other robbers came up similarly mounted, who all then together fell upon the men with the consignment, put them to flight, and plundered it, with the exception of one camel-load, which escaped to Jodhpore with the intelligence, as already described. The owners of the plundered property now claimed compensation, but which the Gujowar's Government *declined*, on the ground, as the memorandum declares, that the established practice of having a local *Buláhi* with the treasure, *was not pursued*: "It was folly," thus lectures the Yád, "to neglect that most essential rule and precaution, and it is astonishing that it should have been so. It follows that the petition of the complainants cannot be entertained, and that they have no just claim against the inhabitants of *Butláj*, in whose limits the robbery took place, and they cannot establish it." Not a word in explanation of or excuse for the fact of the robbery itself!

4th April,* *Hamilton Hotel; Delhi*.—In travesty* of the frontier arrangements declared to have been made (*vide* p. 398,) Blair now writes (two years after their supposed establishment :)—“ From what I have heard, I am inclined to believe that the arrangements made by the Maharajah of Jeypore, for the suppression of Dacoitie in Shekawátie, have not been very successful. Indeed, unless His Highness is prepared to invest a fearless and honest official with extensive powers amongst the petty and semi-independent Thakoors of Shekawátie, with power both to reward and to punish, we may not hope that the crime will be at once stamped out. I believe His Highness shrinks from more active and severe measures, fearing that it may create opposition and disturbance, and, as such, call down upon him the displeasure of our Government.”

Lapse in
Frontier
Arrange-
ments.

Write home as to the training of our twin sons, now youths getting on, for a start of some kind in life. The desire seems to be to bring them out as Civil Engineers, to which end their school-master at Southampton (a “College” he calls his seminary,) proposes they should cease acquiring *Latin*. I object—a fair knowledge of Latin was an essential part of a gentleman’s education; and that as to his other *fad*, both lads being, as he declares, “so very backward,” I feared they would hardly earn a competency as *civil engineers*, and that my intention in regard to them was *the Army* and service in India.

Personal.

My office-work to-day occupied me in taking

Gogo
Dacoitie.

down recently admitted cases of Dacoitie, the deed of *Meenas* and *Rhátóres*, of which the following is an example, and an example also of the distances of their enterprises. It was an old affair, committed when the narrator of it was quite a young man, but was a leader, nevertheless, named *Boomah Jat*, now an approver. He said he had conducted the gang (a mixed one,) from Jeypore territory down as far as *Pálee*, the great desert *entrepôt*. They had twelve camels with them, and they alighted at the usual *Musáfir khána*, or travellers' rest-house at that place. They there learnt from a man in the employment of a local *Mahájun*, imparted as a secret to a fellow tribesman in the gang, that his master looked for the arrival shortly of a consignment of treasure from *Gogo*, the port for Bombay on the coast of *Kattyawár*, in the Gulf of Cambay: "Upon this, I started the gang upon camels, accompanied by my confidential man mounted upon my own riding camel, to search out the convoy. They met it distant about forty koss, on the direct route from *Gogo*. The treasure was laden on a *kattár* of camels, under an escort of about a dozen men, who were forthwith attacked, and one of their number killed outright by a blow on the head from a bludgeon, seeing which the rest of the escort fled, and the treasure was plundered. It consisted of silver *reals*, of *rupees* of the Company's mint, gold *venetians*, *lurrs* or bars of gold, and other valuables to the extent of about a lakh and twenty thousand rupees, with all of which the gang came back to *Pálee*

within ten days of the time they had left me there. They declared there was a deal more which they were obliged to leave on the spot. It was asserted that the *Khôj* of this robbery was carried to the house of a Thakoor at *Summundree*, in Jodhpore territory (a pretence for the sake of compensation,) and he was summoned to Jodhpore. I don't know the result. We certainly in our flight passed close to that village, but that was all. When the gang approached Pálee with the booty, they sent in word to me, and I forthwith came out to them, and we together pursued our escape. On our reaching Surwurree of Seekur, in Shekawátie, we there divided our spoils—a share of 5,000 rupees was allotted to each man and for every camel. My own share consisted of two ingots of gold, sixty-one gold venetians, and 10,000 rupees cash. Several of us had buried what was not at once wanted. A Thakoor of *Patowda*, the place from which we had started, got information of what we had been about. He sent to the owners of the plundered treasure to meet him, and he then insisted on our restoring the plunder, or that we should know more of his power over us. We were thus compelled to disgorge to him what we had put by and had not yet disposed of. By this device he managed to wring quite 75,000 rupees from us. No one of our number was arrested. The gang numbered *twelve* persons only.”—In truth, the gang belonged to, and was sent out by that very Thakoor, one *Bukhtáwurjee*, and when the affair got talked of, he felt his position too much at

stake not to restore to the owners a portion at least of the plunder. He therefore pretended to have himself traced the robbery, and having got some other persons arrested for it, he thought to back up that act by finding a portion of the booty also.

Rescue of
Doongur
Sing from
the Agra
Jail.

For he was one of a set of a daring brotherhood of Thakoors, who, about ten years previously, had attacked the British jail at Agra, and rescued from it their "Nephew," *Doongur Sing*, famous as a freebooter and an outlaw, who, for a robbery near *Pálee* of some shawl merchants, travelling through *Shekawátie* with a rich consignment of valuable shawls and *Pushmina* cloth, intended for exportation from Bombay, valued at *three lakhs of rupees* (referred to in footnote at p. 26,) had been sentenced to transportation for life, and awaited removal from that jail to Calcutta. A great many other convicts were set free from the jail at the same time. The daring exploit was followed by the perpetrators, now headed by *Doongur Sing* himself, attacking and plundering the Field Paymaster's Treasure Chest at *Nusseerabad* in *Rajpootanah*, in defending which the *Havildar* or *Serjeant* of the Guard, was killed, and several *Sepoys* wounded. They also set fire to several bungalows in the British Cantonments at *Nusseerabad*, in revenge, the outlaw declared, "for the *Sahib Lógue* interfering in a robbery (that of the shawl merchants,) which had not been committed in British territory, and in no way concerned them." *Doongur Sing* was finally captured by Colonel, then Captain Eden, and died while in

He
plunders
the
Military
Chest at
*Nusseer-
abad*.

Capture,
imprison-
ment, and
Death.

confinement in the fortress of Jodhpore. The Thakoor who took so foremost a part in these proceedings, was, from his relationship with the Ruler of Bikaner, in some way restored to favour and replaced at Patowda, and he was afraid he might forfeit further consideration if he did not now, on the present occasion, do something in the matter. The plundered portion of the shawls and other fabrics in the previous robbery, was valued at *two lakhs* of rupees. *Doongur Sing*, or “Doongurjee,” as he was generally called, was associated on that occasion with the equally notorious Rhátore bandit *Bukhtáwurjee*, the Thakoor already mentioned. Both leaders were arrested by Captain Birch, the Assistant General Superintendent of the period for Rajpootanah, who also recovered and restored to the owners, a considerable portion of the plunder, to the extent, the record states, of “half a lakh,” or 50,000 rupees. *Bukhtáwurjee*, from his relationship to the Ruler of Bikaner, was screened, and so escaped conviction, but Doongurjee was sentenced as above, and sent to the Agra jail.

Attacks by dacoits upon military treasure chests have not been infrequent. Several such cases have come under my official cognizance — one particularly, which took place in the cantonments of Sholapoor down Bombay, on the Treasure Tumbril of *Captain Lewis*, the military paymaster of the Force. On this occasion the two night-sentries over the Treasure were suddenly speared, and the entire guard cleverly shut up within the

Attack on
Military
Chest at
Shola-
poor.

Another
Instance
of Attack
and
Plunder
of the
Military
Chest.

guard-room ; but on breaking open one of the two compartments of the tumbril, that which their leader had previously taken note of, the dacoits, dismayed at finding it empty, fled in haste (the "alarm" having been sounded,) carrying away with them a companion who had received a gunshot wound, either from the Native sentinel in the adjacent compound, or at the hands of one of the Sahibs seated at the time in the verandah of Lewis's house. The treasure-bags had, by the merest chance, been shifted that forenoon into the other compartment of the tumbril.³ Some members of this gang fell into my own custody in another expedition, a time after when I was the Assistant of the special department for the Bombay circle of our general superintendence. They were *Khunjurs*, another gang of whom had similarly attacked another Treasure Guard of Regular Infantry when halted for the night on the line of march, and not only slew the Havildar or Serjeant of the Guard, and speared the sentinels, killing them outright, but even secured the arms of the entire guard, standing at the time at *pile* outside of its *soldárees* or tents, cast them away in some proximate *Thoor* or hedge of the prickly pear, and carried away all the money-bags. Some of this gang were also eventually captured by our detectives (*vide* Journal for 1847).

5th April, *Hamilton Hotel, Delhi*.—I continue translating dacoitie cases. They are full of inci-

³ P.S.—This bold dacoit venture will be found reverted to, and fully narrated with all its incidents, in vol. ii. p. 101.

dent. Here is another case committed more recently near that same *Gogo*, treasure under conveyance from where has so often been the dacoits' opportunity. Certain *Meena* leaders, residing at and round about *Kôt-Pootlee* near *Khêtree* (*vide* pp. 317, 322, and 329,) agreed to band their several quotas together and proceed therewith to the extreme end of *Guzerat*, as the expedition of the season. Among them was a man who has since become one of our Approvers. The gang thus formed numbered *thirty-five* persons, who, travelling in small parties, arrived in a month's period as far as *Bhownuggur*, the mart of *Kattyawâr*, *Guzerat*, and the regions in that direction. On mustering there, a couple of the leaders went to the neighbouring port of *Gogo* for information, and which they were not long in acquiring. They hastened back with the intelligence, namely, that a convoy of fifteen camels laden with treasure, arrived by steamer from *Bombay* for the purchase of cotton, had started for *Ahmedabad*. The gang followed it up for three stages. Its fourth halting-ground was on a common, a koss short of *Râeka*, a village situated in the British district of *Ahmedabad*. The convoy alighted there; the robbers kept out of sight in the jungle hard by. At midnight they fell upon and plundered it. Each man lifted away as much as he could carry, and the rest of the booty was placed upon their camels and on a couple of ponies. It consisted, according to the Approver *Nândga*, of "*khoors*" or bricks of silver, "*lurrs*" or ingots of gold, and a lot of uncoined but fashioned silver

Râeka
Dacoitie
on a
Treasure
Convoy
from
Bombay.

pieces, in value about two rupees each. For the rest of that night they pursued a course in the direction of *Mount Aboo*, and by evening they reached a village about eighteen koss distant from the scene of the dacoitie, and alighted there in two separate parties, the treasure carriers distinct from those in charge of the laden animals. To the inquiries of the village people, they replied they were Rajpoots "on their way home from visiting *Dwárka*." At about nine o'clock that night the transport party had laden their animals and were on the point of renewing their flight, when some horsemen suddenly came up in pursuit of them. The robbers declared to them that they were "pilgrims from *Dwárka*, returning homewards," but the horsemen at once fired upon them—whereupon the dacoits fled, leaving the bulk of their plunder on the ground. But two of their number had been killed, and seven were arrested. The rest dispersed and eventually got back to their homes with the saved portion of their plunder—as much as 35,000 rupees! The division of this took place at *Kôt-Pootlee*. Each dacoit got 700 rupees as his share of it, the leaders retaining higher shares, as was usual, not only for themselves, but for future common necessities. The entire consignment, as despatched from Bombay, was estimated at *a lakh and twenty-five thousand rupees*, and it consisted of "silver bullion, gold ingots, *unstamped dollar pieces*, and a quantity of brass utensils, all for conveyance to *Delhi*." The pursuit happened in this way. The plundered camel-men reported the robbery next morning at

the police station of *Dhundooka*, in the British district of *Ahmedabad* in Guzerat. The police promptly went to the spot, and there they learnt that the robbers had been observed to go off in three different parties. Help being obtained from two neighbouring police stations, search was made in every direction, and the robbers' flight was discovered that night in the manner above described. The duty was excellently performed. Not only were two of the dacoits killed and the seven who had been wounded in the conflict, arrested, and two camels and a couple of ponies taken possession of, but treasure to the value of 86,000 rupees was recovered. This, with the 35,000 rupees which the escaped dacoits managed to get away with, left only 4,000 rupees unaccounted for, and this must have been left on the ground of the dacoitie. The arrested men gave assumed names and castes, and declared to the Magistrate *they were not robbers and had only come down from the direction of Delhi in search of service*. They were eventually sentenced to transportation for life.

In the following case the dacoits (*Meenas*) had made a long cast and were knocking about in doubtful quest of a booty. They had gone down from their homes in *Ulwur* territory as far as *Surat*, and were returning unsuccessful when luck attended them. "Five *Angrias* (treasure carriers,) were going from *Meeahgam* on their way with treasure from *Surat* to *Baroda*, with whom we fell in and plundered them near a hamlet short of *Baroda*. The hour was about eleven o'clock at night. ' We

The Pursuit,
Conflict,
Arrest,
and
Recovery
of the
Plunder.

Robbery
of some
Treasure
Carriers
near
Meeah-
gam.

got from them a booty to the value of about 80,000 rupees in gold, pearls, and other valuable things. No one gave us information of this treasure being under conveyance, but we got to know of it ourselves that these men were 'Rôlcurryas' (i.e. *Angrias*,) and must be in charge of something valuable. We kept to the jungles and wastes, and so got away home safely with our booty. There were sixteen of us. I was a young hand then."

Mr.
Wright,
Collector
of
Customs,
and the
Turnbulls.

Dined with Mr. Wright, the collector of Delhi, a very hospitable gentleman. In the company were Mr. Turnbull, the Judge of Meerut, and Mr. Money, the Chief Commissioner of Salt Customs—both high Bengal civilians. The former is a brother of my fellow cadets at Addiscombe, *Alick and Montague Turnbull*. Alick came out in the Engineers, was at the siege of Delhi, and lately died. "Monty," as the other is still familiarly called, came out in the Bengal Cavalry, and is now Army Clothing Agent and a prime favourite. I met him, for the first time since 1835, at the late great Durbar at Agra, and certainly did not know the "Old Man," any more than he recognized the "Old Fellow," as we mutually accosted each other.

6th April, *Hamilton Hotel, Delhi*.—One *Hydur Khan*, a man allied to the *Kaim-Khânees* of *Shekavâtie*, if not of the same race, and hailing from *Dunkôlee*, a village near *Deedwanah*, the salt-yielding place in *Jodhpore* territory, had long been in the service of the *Hyderabad State* in the *Deccan*, and had risen to rank and command.

His uncle, *Mahommed Khan*, had before him, for long service to the same State, contrived to obtain the grant from that Government, of an extensive *Jághire* within the territory, that yielded him an annual income of 300,000 rupees, in consideration whereof he bound himself to keep up a body of seven hundred horse for the service of the Nizam. To the command of this contingent his nephew, the said *Hydur Khan*, in due course succeeded; and he admitted a great many Kaim-Khánees into it. These men more or less engaged in dacoitie, then some time of frequent occurrence in those regions. For *Hydur Khan*'s horsemen were posted at several points round about, and he was thereby able to supply dacoit leaders coming down from *Rajpootanah*, with information of booty. Among other places, *Jalnah* was a point of observation, and there a detachment of his contingent was posted in a *dêrah* or cantonment on the opposite side of the river, the troops of the regular local garrison (*Madras Cavalry*, *Artillery*, and *Infantry*,) being on the hither side of it. So that frequent intercourse was kept up with Kaim-Khánees, *Meenas*, and *Rhâtôres*, come down from *Rajpootanah* on dacoitie enterprises; and *Jeewun Khan*, Kaim-Khánee (one of our approvers,)* by reputation a camel carrier only, was one of them; and *Shere Khan*, also a Kaim-Khánee, was another. The latter had formed a small gang of his own, and he assumed the name of *Buldeo Sing*, a Hindoo name. These men, in concert with *Gobind Sing Meenah*, another leader, agreed to commit dacoitie together,

Robber
Con-
federacy
at Jainah.

* Vide p.
293.

Bhooma Ját, now an approver, being of the number. *Jeerun Sing*, their police confederate (*vide* pp. 164 and 190,) communicated to them the despatch from Bombay of a consignment of treasure. It reached Mulkapoor by rail in charge of five persons, the head man of whom, said to be a Sikh, came to the leaders *Gobind Sing* and *Shere Khan*, told them that the remittance consisted chiefly of *reals*, "*khoors*" or *silver brick*, etc., valued in all at 30,000 rupees, and that he would "not obstruct" them if they would assure him of a reasonable share of the plunder. They mutually took the required oaths accordingly, and being advised to head the convoy by sending on some men, they despatched twelve men mounted upon six camels to do so. The treasure, laden upon a cart, had meanwhile been sent on, but by taking a shorter route the plunderers got ahead of the cart, and lay in ambush in a ravine between *Mulkapoor* and *Khám-gám*, called *Burkhêra-Pimplegám*. The cart arrived there at dusk, and the robbers at once thereupon fell upon it, the men in charge and the cart-driver immediately running away. Loading their camels with the bags of money and the bullion, the dacoits made off with their booty and buried it in the jungle, at a spot about a koss from Mulkapoor, and then quietly entered the latter place with their camels, before news of the robbery had reached it. Next morning, on the robbery becoming known, *Captain Davies* (then newly appointed a sub-assistant to myself, conjointly with his office of local police officer,) searched the sus-

Treasure
Dacoities
near
Ghát-
póorie.

pected Jeewun Khan's place unavailingly. The leaders shortly after this dug up their prize, took it to *Oomraotee*, and divided it among the gang, Jeewun Khan getting 2,000 rupees as his share of it. A month subsequently, when *Dutta*, *Heera* and another Meena leader, had come down to the same neighbourhood from *Shajánpoor*, the Meena colony near Delhi, on dacoitie intent, Jeewun Khan, Shere Khan, and some Kaim-Khánee Sowárs of the above Rissálah, joined hands with them, and upon information acquired by the said Hydur Khan, the commander of the Rissálah, they together proceeded to commit dacoitie. At *Khám-gám* they were advised to go to *Mulcapoor*, by the way of *Julgám*, then lately become a railway station. They went thence to *Pimplegám*, and there came upon the sought-for cart of which they had been told, laden with treasure then also just sent up from Bombay for the purchase of cotton; whereupon they "forsook the road by which we had been travelling, and, turning off into another, we went a little way towards some hills, and then doubled back towards *Khám-gám*. Night overtook us in a ravine between *Julgám* and *Ghátpoorie*, and there we concealed ourselves. The cart came up by the spot shortly after. Four matchlock men were in charge of it. Raising a shout we fell upon them with our clubs, and, depriving them of their weapons, put them to flight. We then plundered the cart and got from it a booty consisting of 10,000 rupees in cash, and 10,000 rupees in lumps of silver" (the report stated the plunder was to the

Treasure
Dacoitie
near
Burkhérah,
Pimple-
gám.

extent of 26,250 rupees in all,) "and this we buried at a spot about three koss from the scene of the robbery, in a waste in the direction of *Jalnah*. We then dispersed, some going to *Jalnah*, some to *Oomráotee* and *Ellichapoor*, and a few to *Kárinjáh*; but we avoided *Khamgám* because of the presence there of Captain Davies." Fifteen days later the leaders met at *Jalnah*, in their tryst at that place, and proposed to recover the booty; but Jeewun Khan (now our approver,) had meanwhile hired himself out with his camels for the transport of some other treasure, so he sent his accomplice, *Shere Khan*, to be present at the distribution. All thereafter proceeded with the spoils back to their country—Jeewun Khan and some of his *Káim-Khánees* with their camels laden with the dye called "koosoom" or *bastard saffron*. They disposed of this commodity at Indore, and went on to Ajmere—while halted where a quarrel took place among them in the matter of the division of the gains of the expedition, whereupon one of the party pushed on ahead and spitefully gave information of them at the frontier station of *Purbutsir*, near *Koocháwun*. He conducted a party of *Márwár* horsemen and had his comrades arrested with some of their plunder upon them, while yet they had not passed over that frontier, which if they had succeeded to do, they would have entered *Shekawátie* and got clean away. Jeewun Khan and five others were thus apprehended. They were claimed by us and found to be important dacoits. Jeewun Khan was sentenced to transportation for life, the others to

various shorter periods ; and he was admitted by me to approvership, becoming a very good one. Some time after this the above-mentioned Káim-Khánee, named *Shere Khan*, fell into the custody at Jalnah of my assistant, Captain Ward, in connection with the above and another affair. In the latter case he was detected in "appropriating" a sum of 5,600 rupees that had been entrusted to him for delivery as a carrier. Ward has just written to me admitting that he was in error, as I had pointed out to him, in committing this man for "dacoitie" in that case, but that *Shere Khan* had, nevertheless, "been punished for the theft, and the whole of the property been recovered and restored to the owner of it." This is a good thing accomplished, as it leads the local Sahoocars to assist us in our operations.*

* P.S.—The same individual, *Shere Khan*, at a subsequent date came into the custody of the Nagpoor police in connection with the treasure dacoities in Nimar, at Burwai and Desgam (*vide* p. 318, vol. i., and pp. 125, 287, vol. ii.) and being claimed by us for the dacoity at Burkhêra-Pimlegám above related, was eventually transported. The following, quoted from my report of it to the Government of India, is a similar instance of Captain Ward's work down at Jalnah, in a case of occurrence shortly after that mentioned in the text : "The above (dacoity at Sidhpoor, *vide* pp. 205, 262, 334, and 405,) will be a sufficient example of the condition of Márwár and how Meena-Rhátores are occupied there, and I will conclude my notice of that State with one more instance of their excesses in that territory. In January I received a petition from one *Hunmuntram Nógla*, an inhabitant of Jeysumlere, residing at Jalnah as the agent of a banking firm, imploring my assistance in rescuing his son and some others from a gang of Meena dacoits, into whose hands they had fallen and who demanded a heavy ransom for their release. They were on their way from *Jeysumlere* to join him at Jalnah, and had reached *Palae* in safety, but when advanced about ten miles from that place they were attacked, close upon the *Sómair Pass* in *Gódwár*, by a band of robbers mounted upon camels. *Gódwár* is a tract running along the *Meywar-Márwár*

Dacoitie
in Gódwár; two
Persons
Killed;
Captives
held to
Ransom;
their
Release
without
Ransom

Concern-
ing Delhi.

Hamilton Hotel contains a goodly company, among them the wife of the popular Adjutant of 79th Highlanders (a wing of which Corps is stationed in the City Fort,) and her two sisters, arrived a week since from England, both fresh and blissful. They have created quite a sensation among the Highlander officers—who flock to the hotel, bonnets and all.

Major Sykes, of the Army Commissariat, lies very, very ill, worn away with consumption.

Dined again, "*brass knocker*," at Mr. Wright's. This expression is derived from the very old Anglo-Indian habit of asking familiar acquaintances to a *réchauffé* of the good things of a previous "spread":—"Come to-morrow and have some *Bási-Khána*" (literally, *stale food*.) Many think the morrow repetition of the more ceremonious ball or other

border, from near *Todghur* in *Mhairwára*, to the north-east of *Erinpoora*, the province of *Siróhi* edging its southern extremity. It is a beautiful district and is called the *Garden of Márwár*. The bandits fired upon them, wounding three of their camel-men and another attendant, of whom two died, plundered the entire convoy, and captured and carried off six persons of the party, namely, the petitioner's son, two relatives, and three servants. When the robbers reached their retreat in a hill close to *Erinpoora*, they sent away two of the captured attendants, in charge of an associate to *Oodeypore*, with a demand for a ransom of 3,500 rupees for the liberation of the others, and this had only just been communicated by post to the unhappy father. The range of this particular gang, extended from *Erinpoora* to the *Aravullee Hills*, and their places of refuge were two hills, one at *Doodeealee*, on the frontier of the two States of *Siróhi* and *Márwár*, ten miles from the military station of *Erinpoora*, and the other at *Poomáwa* close to that station. Enclosure 27 gives an account of the action in the case of this department. *The release of the captives was effected by Captain Ward, without ransom, but the gang has yet to be accounted for.*"

festive diversion of to-day, the more enjoyable, because of the less restraint and of the invited fewer.

7th April, Hamilton Hotel, Delhi, Sunday.—The church is just over the way. Was there for the morning service. At evening I attended Major Sykes's funeral in the cemetery outside of the Cashmere Gate.

To attack and plunder *Burráts* or marriage processions, is a favourite pastime with dacoits. There are several instances of it in the Dacoity Lists I am engaged in preparing, and of cases of the robbery of persons returning from distant *mêlas* or fairs. The latter are more instances of open depredation, but the plunder of *Burráts* is generally planned and carried out systematically, upon information previously obtained. The following is one such. A marriage had been celebrated down in *Bhopáwur* by certain rich Mahájuns, and the *Burrát* or procession of those who had attended it (generally with a numerous retinue, all richly apparelled, the females of the party bedecked with jewellery of great price,) was journeying through the limits of the village of *Pálásee*, on its return homeward from Ali-Rajpore in native territory. A mixed gang, but mostly of Meenas, all under the leadership of *Hookma*, now one of our Meena approvers, was down there in quest of prey. It joined and mingled with the procession. Presently the hitherto well-dissembling robbers, without further concealment, began to beat about and plunder the people of which it was composed.

Death of
Major
Sykes.

Robbery
of a
Burrát or
Marriage
Procession.

Information of the intended procession had been communicated to a Môghya in the gang, by a confederate of the place where the marriage took place. The Môghya imparted it to the leader, who thereupon planned and carried out the robbery in the manner stated. The women, in terror, at once divested themselves of their ornaments and costly clothes, and gave them up. The Mahájuns in like manner threw off their shawls, &c. The plunder consisted, the approver said, of silver *lungurs* or chain-anklets, silver *bangles*, pearl *chowkütrees* or earrings, and such things; also articles of apparel, of which no account was taken; but it was not, he said, on this occasion a very valuable booty. The Jemadar of the neighbouring *Thánah*, or police station, at *Chicklár*, made some kind of search for the offenders, but failed to obtain any traces of them; although one of the dacoits who had got wounded in the general *hooroosh*, had died and his body been burnt two days subsequently at a village only two koss distant! The man or Bhêdee who gave the information as to the *burrát*, obtained a share of 800 rupees in the distribution of the plunder.

Personal 8th April, Hamilton Hotel, Delhi.—Have failed to persuade brother Albert to take leave to Simlah this season from down Madras. Dear zealous fellow, he cannot relinquish his command for a day: "The regiment would go to the dogs" without him!

**Dacoits
as Free-
lances.**

Sometimes these dacoits are out on plundering expeditions of no fixed purpose, but more like in quest of adventure—not always of

a very chivalous nature. Take, for example, the following : The gang was just a squad of six mounted *rodeurs*, two upon camels and four on horseback—a mixed lot—men of Shekawátie, led by a man now one of our approvers, by caste a *Ját*. I take the account from the narrative of his life, a requirement we exact from every approver as a *sine qua non*. They had wandered towards *Hissár*, situated over the British frontier, and when arrived at a village near it, they were taken in by the local Patell or village headman. His advice was to keep to the *common* to avoid suspicion ; whereupon they lay close in a neighbouring jungle, lurking about. Their friend was also on the lookout for them, and sent them their meals. He informed them of the house of a well-to-do *Bunya* in a neighbouring village, which they might attempt. But they had not come out to commit regular dacoitie, they must have more men and organized means for that ; and they therefore rejected the proposition, but went instead to a hamlet a couple of koss from *Gáwúr*, the said Patell's village, at the hour (usually about 9 a.m.) the women of the place would be at the village well to draw water. A crowd of females had collected there, whom they forthwith deprived of the ornaments upon their persons, and obtained thereby a booty for present necessities, of about 250 rupees. The women were greatly terrified. The villagers gave chase, but the robbers were mounted, and easily got away. They then straightway went to another village about a koss distant only. Several women

were issuing from it with the morning meal of their husbands at labour in the fields, whom they stopped and plundered in the same way, scarcely a mile outside of the village. The women raised no cry, and suffered themselves to be stripped of their ornaments, but one woman managed to escape the affront. The booty was small. While returning to their rendezvous they passed by a village about a mile only distant from the place of their last exploit, and there they perceived five women assisting a husbandman in irrigating a field, whom they also plundered of some cash and the gold and silver ornaments they were wearing, the whole valued at about three hundred rupees. They perpetrated these three acts of plunder on one and the same forenoon, and thereupon proceeded straightway back into Shekawátie. But trackers had been set to work, who followed up their *Khôj* from each of the three places, to the spot where they had lain in wait outside of *Gáwur*, and as this was within the limits of the charge of their friend the Patell, he was arrested and conducted before the magistrate at Hissár. Being released, however, on security, he forthwith went to the robbers and declared to them that he had been bound over to obtain restitution of the plundered articles, and, in good faith on their side, they gave up all to him accordingly:—"We cannot say whether he restored them or not." The double rogue did not do so, *but appropriated* everything, his story being a mere *ruse* to apply the plunder to his own benefit. "After we had committed these robberies, some

Sowars came down after us, headed by a *Sahib* (the Hissár police superintendent,) to try to hunt us up, but no one was found."

9th April, *Hamilton Hotel, Delhi*.—It is heavy work getting through the life narratives of the several new approvers, but their tales are remarkable, full of anecdote, out of each of which a romance might be woven. The incidents are really of flood and field, call them "of rapine and bloodshed" as we may. Here is one of the sort: The leader of the gang was one *Kyum Sing*, a Rhátôre. He was associated on the occasion with the man *Hurree Sing*, and with *Oodah alias Oodjee* (both mentioned before as of the four prisoners rescued by *Kishen Sing*, the former's brother, from Ward's lock-up last November—*vide* pp. 29 and 163.) It has been seen that *Kishen Sing* was lately arrested at Ajmere upon information traitorously given by the fellow *Choutmull*, with whom the two brothers had fallen out when travelling in his company on their way up from Berár, but that *Hurree Sing* had evaded arrest (*vide* pp. 181, 182.) A Rhátôre named *Mookundjee*, trading some time at Julnah, had resolved on removing to Indore with his goods and family. A *Bhát* or man of the bard caste, had for some time been in his service, to whom he even gave a parting present in token thereof. The *Bhát* all the same, repaired to Pimplegám, the *déra* or rendezvous of *Kyum Sing*, and informed him of the projected journey. *Mookundjee's* reputed wife (a *locum tenens*,) was said to be a lovely

Kyum Sing Rhátôre.

Distraction
created
by a
Female.

Dacoities,
a foul
Murder,
and Ab-
duction.

woman, a native of Márwár. She was a great attraction among the Rhátôres down there, and was particularly coveted by *Bukhtáwurjee*, the brother of *Kyum Sing*, and secretly by the latter also. He resolved to obtain possession as well of her as of the man's wealth, both at one stroke. Having taken of each other the customary oaths of secrecy, preliminary to the enterprise, he set off with his men, bent on his purpose, twelve men in all including himself, *Hurree Sing* and *Oodah* being of the number. Arrived the second day at a village near Jalnah, he sent in a scout to learn whether the man had yet started. The messenger came back with information that the party had done so that very morning for Indore. The dacoits thereupon proceeded to a village in that direction to intercept it, and found that the travellers had already also arrived there; upon which they went on to a hamlet a little way further on. The travellers again set out next morning, and the dacoits, at a proper distance, followed them. At noon the former stopped to refresh at a well outside of a village by the way. The robbers also came up there, as though they themselves were travellers, and engaged the others in conversation, but were desired by *Mookundjee*, who perceived their object, to keep themselves at a distance. Upon this, at a signal from the leader, two of his men fired off their guns upon the party, and *Kyum Sing* himself rushed in, pistol in hand, and shot down the man *Mookundjee*, two others despatching him with their swords. The robbers then plundered the party.

They took possession of the murdered man's horse, in value 500 rupees, his camel worth 100 rupees, all his money, and a quantity of gold and silver ornaments and other things, with all of which they hasted forthwith to a village a stage from their *dérah*. They also carried off the woman and her child, whom the leader of the gang claimed and appropriated, and on the following day they got back to their encampment. The occasion created a great sensation in the neighbourhood. The woman was subsequently a source of great contention and heart-burnings among the robber leaders. The scene of the outrage was at *Timurnee*, in Nizam's territory. The plunder was valued at 20,000 rupees, but no full division of it was carried out on this occasion.⁵

This case runs on into another in connection with Mail Cart Plun-
dered. (I believe,) the same female, thus: "I was driving the mail cart on a dark moonless night four or five months ago, and had arrived near *Oomurgah*

⁵ P.S.—Unfortunately we had no Approvers in this heinous case. *Kyum Sing*, *Hurree Sing*, and *Oodjee* were in Major Ward's custody, of whom the two latter were of the four who were rescued from his lock-up. *Kyum Sing* was also in custody at the same time, but he did not go off with the others (*vide* footnote, p. 284, vol. ii.) and him; we were unable to send up except on the *general charge* of being a dacoit. On this charge he was tried in the court of the Resident at Hyderabad, and sentenced to transportation for ten years. *Oodah* was re-arrested in *Khandeish*, along with the man *Jowahirra Durzee*, another of the rescued prisoners (*vide* pp. 177, 182, 282, vol. ii.) and he, as well as the latter, were later on sentenced to fourteen years' transportation. *Jowahirra* was admitted to Approvership, but was not a good witness in that capacity, and was distrusted by Major Ward accordingly.

Muns^e
Woman's
Account.

Murder.

in Nizam's territory, when three men, whose faces I got no sight of, attacked the cart. One man seized the horse from the front, the other two came, one on each side of me, and began to hit me with their clubs. I jumped off and ran away to the nearest *chowki* or road police station. The robbers never spoke the whole time. I should be unable to know them." This was the statement given by the driver of the mail cart running from Sholapoor to Hyderabad, to Major Stubbs, our assistant at the latter place. The mail comprised a deal of more than usually valuable property, a considerable quantity of velvet and gold lace, four hundred English *sovereigns*, several spurious *Hanoverian sovereigns* and *half-sovereigns*, and a parcel containing five lumps or dollops of gold, the whole to the value, according to the dacoits, of 27,000 rupees. *Messalina* had meanwhile been adopted by another "husband." Her statement: "*Kishen Sing* came to visit us. He had nothing then but his mare and the clothes he wore. We together went to *Poos*, to the house of the local *Deshmook* or district headman. Leaving me and my *bylee* or bullock conveyance there, *Kishen Sing* and my husband went away to *Jalnah*, accompanied by another *Rhâtôre*, one *Boom Sing*. They came back nine days subsequently with three others, *but not my husband*. They said he had gone away to *Latoor*. A carpet bag which they brought with them, and which they opened in my presence and in that of *Bájee Ráw*, the uncle of the absent *Deshmook*, contained a quantity of rupees, a parcel

of gold money, a gold ornament, some *dôshûlas* (shawls,) English dresses, gold lace, etc. These they left with Bajee Rao, and as I had said I would go to Latoor, they accompanied me there, *Kishen Sing* on his mare, *Boom Sing* and *Motee Sing* on a camel, and the other two men, *Jaitia* and *Banjee*, on foot. At Poos we were joined by *Rám Sing* and his brother *Rajah Rám* (not a word here about her missing husband!) *Kishen Sing* here gave a *heavy gold bracelet* and a sum of 150 rupees to the latter, to be made use of in procuring the release from the city jail of his brother *Hurree Sing* (meanwhile arrested for another robbery.) "We all then went back to Poos. *Kishen Sing* was my paramour, but I now looked upon him as the murderer of my husband, and I declined to accompany him; for when the party came back from *Jalnah* without my husband, I saw *his gold bracelet*, some gold and silver ear-ornaments, his silver waist-belt and sword, and his pugree and shoes, in *Kishen Sing's* possession! I was determined to be avenged. They all made ready to go up to their native country. *Rám Sing* proposed to be my friend; he did not wish, he said, to go with them, and offered to help me to escape from *Kishen Sing* if I would give him my cart and bullocks. I assented."—In point of fact, the man *Rám Sing* was a member of the same robber confederacy. He and *Kishen Sing* were fellow countrymen, and both staked for the preference of *Muna*, the *rib-bone* of contention between them, and their *rub*; and so they quarrelled

on her account. Said Ram Sing, "I perceived that Kishen Sing and the men he was accompanied by, had in their possession the very property proclaimed to have been plundered from the mail cart at Oomurgah. I spoke to *Muna* on the subject. She said her husband had gone with Kishen Sing to Jalnah and had not come back with him. *Muna* then gave me four pieces of gold and told me she made me her brother, and I was to go to Amba (Mominabad,) and make known to the Sahibs of the Rissálah there, where the robbers of the mail cart were." He thereupon went to Colonel Abbot, the Commandant of the *Rissálah* (Hydrabad Contingent Cavalry,) and to him betrayed the gang:—"I was then sent with ten Sowárs and a Jemadar to *Poos*. We halted outside of the village gate, which was locked for the night, and I was sent inside to entice them out. I climbed into the place and went to where the robbers were assembled. They jumped up, and, putting their guns at my breast, demanded where I had been. I replied I had been out shooting and had accidentally shot a cartman, and was obliged to hide myself. They said I must take them to where the corpse was. So Kishen Sing on his mare, and *Jaitia* holding a loaded musket ready to shoot me, came out with me. I led them straight by the moonlight to where the Jemadar's party were lying concealed behind a tower, who at once laid hold of *Jaitia*, but Kishen Sing got away. Picking open the lock of the gate with a dirk, we next entered the village, and at the

Cháoree or police station,* found a camel ready saddled for a start, and a bullock cart with Kishen Sing's property laden upon it, and a pony. From there we went to the house of the Deshmook, and there we found the woman *Muna* concealed in it, but *Bajee Ráo*, the Deshmook's uncle, we found elsewhere in the village. At morning we followed up the footprints of Kishen Sing's mare, and we eventually caught sight of him just as he was entering the house in *Hárungul* of *Bukshee Rám* a Marwáree Bunya of the place. When we got up to the house, the Jemadar called out to the Marwáree to come out. It was now about midday. He came out and then immediately tried to shut himself up in the house. One of the Sowárs rushed, to seize him, whereupon several men, some with drawn swords, came out from the inside of the house to oppose the capture. The Jemadar and I jumped off our nags to help. The Marwáree *Bukshee Rám*, hereupon shouted out an alarm *that the men who had plundered the mail cart were attacking his house*. This cry brought the village inhabitants to the spot, some with clubs and some with swords, who overpowered us, took away our swords, and conducted us out of the village. The Marwáree declared he must conduct us as robbers to the *Náib* or deputy of the district, but on our way there we met another party of Sowárs from

* The *Cháoree* is generally an open spot and a place of assemblage in the centre of a village, where carts and camels are gathered under an idea of its security; but the men supposed to be in charge of it, are not necessarily observant of those who come and go there.

Amba, who, on our story, made prisoners of both the Marwaree *Bukshee Rám*, and of the *Putwáree* or land steward of *Hárungul*."

By the *ruse* of raising the outcry, Kishen Sing escaped capture. He had, however, in the *mêlée* received a sword-cut on his left shoulder from one of Abbot's *Sowárs*. But *Bánjee* and *Jaitia* were arrested, and of the property laden upon the bullock cart, *some of the sovereigns and other articles plundered from the mail cart*, were recovered. *Banjee* and *Jaitia*, in whose possession also some of the property was found, were, on conviction, sentenced to transportation for life; *Bukshee Ram*, the Marwaree with whom too some of the plunder was discovered, got five years' imprisonment with hard labour; *Bájee Ráo* three years; and the village *Putwáree*, charged with resisting the *Sowárs* in the arrest of the others, was let off with three months' imprisonment. The informer *Rám Sing*, who betrayed the dacoits through his entanglement with the woman *Muna*, was to have been charged along with others as a member of the gang, but he died of cholera a few days before the trial came on.

The
Indian
License
Act.

10th April, *Hamilton Hotel, Delhi*.—There is great ferment about the License Act lately introduced by our Financial Minister, Mr. Massey, and Sir John Lawrence and his Council, if never before, are now very unpopular for allowing it. By it I become taxed 200 rupees a year. It is, in fact, a renewed *Income Tax*, accompanied by, a

paper says, "the maximum of oppression with a minimum of revenue." Colonel S., the popular commandant of a British cavalry regiment, a guest at Hamilton's Hotel, on his way up on leave, declares that he will put up a board at his gate at Simlah, with "Licensed to carry arms" upon it following his name and designation—a pretty exact exposition of the "incidence" of the obnoxious measure!

Captain Bruce announces from *Deolee*, the interception in *Indurghur* territory, of an important gang of Meena dacoits, one of those which had lately set out on expeditions of dacoitie from their haunts in this direction round about Kote-Pootlee (*vide* p. 393). We are hitting at these fellows very successfully just now.

A Gang
of Dacoits
Inter-
cepted.

11th April, *Hamilton Hotel, Delhi*.—Still busy translating Approvers' Narratives. Occasionally these histories set off with a startling incident, as for example: "My earliest recollection is my little sister being carried off by a tiger. All our men had gone off to dacoitie, leaving the women and children bivouacked in the outskirt of a forest. My sister and I had roamed into the jungle, and had together fallen asleep. I awoke by her screams, and I saw the monster escaping with her." Another: "My father was hanged. I saw it. He had told mother to make and bring some sweet *choupatees* to his execution. As she reverently held the platter up towards the scaffold (*phánsi ki juggah*,) he desired her, 'don't sorrow, but dedicate these to such and such shrines,'

Dacoit
Life In-
cidents.

stepped back and was hanged.”⁷ But the case that has interested me to-day, is the following, because of it being the deed, although nothing to boast of, of a leader who was a great *Phailwán* or wrestler—a fine handsome athlete, and of polished speech, who had beaten the champion wrestlers of several Rajahs, and had even been entertained as a “Phailwán” by an European gentleman at Agra who was fond of such sport—under cloak of his employment by whom, the consummate highwayman found opportunities, nevertheless, for committing several acts of dacoitie in the neighbouring districts, his men being ever ready to hand for the purpose, and always on the look-out for booty. Four gangs of Meenas from *Ulwur* and neighbouring haunts, had collected at Gwalior on an expedition of dacoitie. A Brahmin, in their secret, had also come down from *Ulwur*. He was versed in narrating *Kuthás*, those recitals of the deeds of ancient heroes to nightly assemblies,

Kuthás,
or *Reci-*
tations.

⁷ P.S.—This is a prevailing ceremony among Hindoos, not only on the decease of a relative, but considered to be indispensable on every recurring anniversary of it, and is intended to propitiate by the performance of it, the supposed troubled spirit, the “*shrádha*” or *manes* of the memory commemorated. Ablutions in some proximate stream or river, offerings of milk, and a certain number of baked wheaten cakes, are its components; which, duly performed, the Brahmin who conducts the ceremony, or the officiating representative of the occasion, repeats the following well-translated verse:—

“Tenant of Æther*—of repose bereft—
Whose form aerial no asylum knows—
Bathe in this water, on this milk regale,
And rest awhile in happiness.”

which Rajpoots and natives generally, are so fond of gathering to listen to, and which the great Mahratta Emperor, *Sivaji*, used himself often to attend and be excited by.* It is said to be the habit of the present *Scindiah* also to do so. And no wonder! for the tales are very stirring, and being sonorously told, every point well emphasized, they are listened to with breathless attention. Not more impressively has ancient Rajpoot bard recounted ancestral legends of Rajpoot chivalry to born warriors raptfully seated on the ground around him, grasping their sword-hilts, and fired by the tale with the spirit of emulation; or herald summoned them to arms! When I have attended these narrations I have always recalled our elocution master at Johnstone's School at Hampstead, how we boys would be kindled, by his utterances as by his voice, when sonorously enunciating to us of "Swedish Charles,"

"A frame of adamant, a soul of fire,
No dangers fright him, and no labours tire;
O'er love, o'er fear, extends his wide domain,
Unconquered lord of pleasure and of pain;
No joys to him pacific sceptres yield,
War sounds the trump, he rushes to the field;

* * * * *

* P.S.—1891. The fabulous exploits detailed in the *Mahá-bhárát*, the *Rámáyun*, and the *Bhugwut*, were the delights of Seevajee's youth; and such was his partiality for *Kuthas* (a sort of dramatic *mélanges*, songs, etc.), that many years after he became famous in the country, he incurred great danger in his anxiety to be present at an entertainment of that description." (Grant Duff's "History of the Mahrattas.") ●

Peace courts his hand, but spreads her charms in vain;
 Think nothing gain'd, he cries, till nought remain,
 On Moscow's walls till Gothic standards fly,
 And all be mine beneath the polar sky."

The "Johnsonian" on the present occasion was heedful, however, the while of his secret purposes; for by so many nightly resorting to his *soirées*, he acquired information of most people of substance to know about whom was any object. Thus he learnt on one such occasion, and duly informed the leader of a band of dacoits, that two *Angrias*, or professional treasure-carriers, were about to start next day with a consignment in cash to be conveyed to *Jhánsi*, and he invited him to his own place to enable him to have them in sight when they should set out. He had taken a house in the "Lushkur," as Scindiah's cantonment city is conventionally called, and the two hired money-carriers resided close by it. Two men of the gang were deputed thereupon for the night, to the said Brahmin's lodgings. The two carriers started accordingly next morning on their projected journey. They were followed by one of the robbers, while the other hastened to apprise their confederates of the information, who lost no time in acting upon it. The *Angrias* (called also *Rókurreas*,) were thus followed by those others, seven men in all, and all eventually alighted for the night at the village of *Antree* in Gwalior territory. The two carriers slept close to the *Chubbootra*, or village police guard house. They were attacked at midnight and deprived of their trust. No one came forth to their assistance; and

Treasure
 Carriers
 Plun-
 dered.

thus the robbers got clear away with their easy prize, and hastened back to Gwalior, reaching it in safety before the day had dawned. The two plundered men were wounded. The booty amounted to 1550 rupees only, so it did not undergo any division, as it scarcely met the advances for daily expenses already made to different members of the entire expedition, of which the present one was merely a quota. But the robbers, upon information similarly acquired from the same knavish spouter, a fortnight subsequently, in stronger number perpetrated another money robbery in contiguous British territory, on a couple of camels laden with treasure under convoy from *Gwalior* to *Agra*, and got a richer booty. The scene was a stage beyond *Dholepore*; the hour eleven o'clock at night; some laden carts had also pulled up at the same spot, and the local police chowkey, too, was close by. The camelmen, the cartmen, and the policemen, all joined in resisting the plunderers, but were beaten off by them and made to run away; but no one was killed or seriously hurt. The booty was 14,100 rupees in cash, ample for distribution; so that the gang hurried off with it to *Shaján-pore*, their great head centre in the so-named outlying district of British territory on the Delhi frontier (*vide* pages 317, 327,) and there each dacoit received a share of 300 rupees, the difference being retained by the leaders for the expenses of the expedition, and for payment among their *Bhédees* or spies, the reciting Brahmin being the principal one of the latter.

Cash
Remit-
tance
Plun-
dered.

Shaján-
pore.

Sudden
Storm.

The clouds had been threatening, and the heat great. At evening they gathered and burst suddenly into a violent storm, as we were at the band of the 79th in the "Queen's Gardens," which set us all in rapid retreat to our homes.

Delhi
Siege
Positions.

12th April, *Hamilton Hotel, Delhi*.—A very enjoyable and long walk of three hours and more, in the delightfully cool morning, along with Mr. Jeffrey, the Cooly emigration agent for Demerara, who is staying with his wife at the hotel on a flying visit from Calcutta. He has been twenty-six years in the West Indies, and yet notwithstanding, he is the picture of robust health, and for portliness, ruddiness, and good nature, a perfect specimen of a *John Bull*. I showed him over all the positions of our troops during the siege of Delhi; the "valley of the shadow of death," being a space below the ridge between it and the standing camp, which from its peculiar conformation, few could pass without being uncomfortably in the region of whizzing bullets, and where indeed several of our officers and men were killed or wounded; the always startling but still yawning graveyard; the flag-staff tower; picket dangerous; the position at *Hindoo Rao's* house and the strong battery by it; the scene where *Tombs* and *Hills* won the Victoria Cross; the rallying posts, and posts of observation; "down in the hollow" under the rocks where many a smart tussle took place; the "Eagle's Nest" picket over a piece of water;—and other spots of interest.

After a storm is the time for the appearance of those beautiful cochineal coloured insects that are met with in these régions. In shape and size like the lady-bird, their backs softly clothed as though with the brightest scarlet velvet, they appear like little gems occasionally dotting the ground. We saw several this morning. I don't think they fly, and I don't know what they are.

Cochineal
Insects.

Dined at the Mess of the 79th Highlanders. Some of the officers danced the Scotch reel, their rare pipers energetically encouraging them in the hot task, and danced beautifully.

Mess of
the 79th
High-
landers.

13th April, Hamilton Hotel, Delhi.—The list under examination to-day for report, of the dacoities narrated by approvers, contains many astonishing acts of plunder, particularly of valuable consignments of treasure while under convoy along the highways. Here is a remarkable instance of one such, accomplished by *four men only* mounted upon a couple of camels, and an instance too of craftiness overreached. Several dacoits had collected in the neighbourhood of the railway station of *Khámgám* in Berár. A *Dullál* or banker's agent, or rather a *broker*, had come down there from desert-planted *Pókurn* in Rajpootanah. He hinted to one of the several quota leaders, that a quantity of treasure was expected from *Malligaum* in Khandeish viâ *Julgám*. It had reached the latter place, and was from there taken on upon a bullock cart in the charge of a couple of Sepoys. The convoy was accordingly attacked that evening on the open between two villages, one of the

Remark-
able act
of
Plānder.

Sepoys shot dead, and the treasure forthwith carried off. The robbers were traced as far as the *Taptee* river, where they had crossed it about twenty miles below *Boorhanpore* on their way back home, and there all further traces of them were lost. But further on, soon subsequently, two of the robbers, a *Chárun* and a *Brahmin*, both residents of *Pôkurn*, each mounted on a camel, were stopped at *Kumpásun*, a frontier revenue post of *Meywár*, for payment of custom dues, and in their possession was found the entire amount of the plunder. The *Chárun* managed to escape then and there, but the other man was conducted with the two camels and the recovered specie to *Oodeypore*, the capital of *Meywár*. Here the plunder was placed in deposit and the prisoner made over to the Marwar Wakeel in attendance on *Colonel Eden*, at that time Political Agent for *Meywár*. This Wakeel, at whose own particular request the *Brahmin* prisoner had been made over to himself, on the ground of the man being a native of *Marwár*, suffered him also to escape. Both fugitives fled to *Pôkurn*, and they there told of their mishap to one *Sirdar Mull*, a *Mahájun* resident at *Pôkurn* and designated the "Basse" of the *Thakoor* or lord of *Pôkurn*. This man at once cunningly set up a claim to the recovered treasure; through his *Kamdár* or agent at *Oodeypore*, declaring that it was illegally taken from his men by the *Meywár* authorities and illegally detained, and he got the *Márwár* Prime Minister to support the claim. The latter brought the complaint to the notice of the British political

agent for Márwár resident at Jodhpore, who thereupon demanded restitution of the money from the political agent for Meywár (Colonel Eden.) Eden hesitated to deliver it up, except the claimant should satisfactorily establish his ownership of it, and he was thereupon peremptorily desired by the Agent to the Governor-General for the Rajpootanah States (*Sir George Lawrence*), "to attend to the requisition;" but, doubtful from the outset of the validity of the claim, Eden still required the desired *proof of ownership*. While a heated correspondence on the subject was going on, a native agent of the really plundered party, who had been deputed by his master to Rajpootanah to try to obtain tidings of the money, accidentally learnt of its interception at Kampásun, as above described, and as the circumstances corresponded with the facts of the robbery, the amount intercepted particularly, he wrote of it to his master at Malligaum, who lost no time in preferring a well-supported claim to the recovered amount, through the British magistrate of Khandeish; and to the latter officer the amount *was eventually given up* accordingly for restitution to the owner, minus a few rupees only which the robbers had probably spent on the road. The false claimant, *Sirdar Mull*, had meanwhile been summoned to prove his claim in person, and when the proper claimant appeared (while the other had not done so,) Eden requested that heavy security be taken from the latter, and that the two fugitive robbers (named *Jádoo* and *Lutchmun*,) be produced to answer the charge "of

highway robbery and murder in British territory." But *Sirdar Mull* had, on the decided stand against his demand, grown lukewarm in pressing it. *He was not to be found*; "he had gone to his place of business, down country." *Res conclusus!*—Nor was *Jádoo* to be found. The other man, *Lutchmun*, was after some time, stated to have been found and sent to Eden at Oodeypore, but he escaped, either on arrival there, or while *en route*, through the agency once more, of the same *Márwár Wukeel* in attendance on Eden as Political Agent at Oodeypore. The Wukeel had, moreover, been instructed by the *Márwár* Prime Minister, who had been very urgent in pressing the false claim, to move no longer in it. It was an object, therefore, to keep the principal parties concerned *out of the way*; for *Sirdar Mull*, it appeared, was even permitted to leave *Pôkurn* without giving the required security. The two men, *Jádoo* and *Lutchmun*, belonged to influential classes (*Chárun* and *Brahmin*,) held in high esteem, whose interests the native officials of the province would very generally preserve (all honour to the winds, and engagements of "extradition," notwithstanding!) independently of any other actuating motive such as that which existed. The false claim, too, was on the point of being conceded through the interest taken in it by the Minister of Jodhpore (*Márwár*,) while yet a true claimant had not appeared; and the plundered money, which amounted to 16,000 rupees, would probably have been given up to him, but for the suspicion with which Colonel Eden had been impressed.

14th April, Hamilton Hotel, Delhi, Sunday.—To church. The preacher at the morning service gave us a jobation for not being more regular in attendance.

15th April, Hamilton Hotel, Delhi.—Drove Mr. Jeffrey this morning to the fine mausoleum erected over the grave of the Emperor *Hoomayoon* (father of the great *Akhabár*.) We also visited the remarkable marble structure in its neighbourhood, consisting of *twenty-five* domes or cupolas, supported by *sixty-four* pillars. It contains the somewhat elaborate tomb of one *Kôka*, a son of the wet nurse of *Hoomayoon* (as we were told.) But the whole of this neighbourhood is a place of tombs, and it is bewildering to attempt to describe one, without falling into the description of the other. Of *Hoomayoon's* tomb, Heber has said that it was "a noble building of granite inlaid with marble, and in a very chaste and simple style of Gothic architecture," but the numerous cloisters surrounding it, running as they do along the crested wall by which the massive structure, its gardens and succession of terraces, are surrounded, would, but for the absence of living soul and the dried up and neglected condition of the grounds, convey the idea of it being some monastery. We were conducted also into an enclosed space within this aggregation of the dead, containing a labyrinth of tombs, old and recent sepulchres of princes and other great men with great titles and flowery epitaphs, chiefly among them being the tomb and shrine of a saint named *Nizamooddeen*, and an

The
Emperor
Hoomayoon's
Tomb.

City of
the Dead.

The
Tomb of
the lovely
Princess
Jehánára.
• The
leading
letters or
numerals
in the
name, etc.,
in the
conclud-
ing sen-
tence of
the in-
scription,
disclosed,
in a
chro-
nogram, the
date of
the Prin-
cess's
demise
—a fre-
quent de-
vice on
Mahom-
medan
tomb-
stones.
It was
also thus
in the
epitaph
on the
tomb of
Tárgum
Sháh
(*vide* p.
121, vol. i.)
The Saint
Shah
Selim
Cheesti.

adjoining musjid raised to his memory. I believe it was owing to his being buried there, and to his reputed holiness, that the spot was selected for the interment of so many deceased royal personages; but though all were of chaste construction, and beautiful, the spotless whiteness of the perforated marble enclosing each, being the striking feature, I was interested above all with the simple grave among them of the devout and filial princess, the beautiful daughter of the founder of modern Delhi, the devoted Emperor who at Agra raised the lovely *Táj* over his own only more beautiful Queen. It consisted simply of an open four-sided *shell* of the purest white marble, eighteen inches high, its upper surface being laid with *turf*, and an enclosing wall of marble open-work, screening the lowly spot. I took down the pretty Persian lines inscribed on the marble ledge or flange around the upper surface of it. They profess to be her signified wishes to be buried unpretentiously; “no rich canopy” to entomb her remains; and “grass” only to cover them, “as most suited to overlies the resting-place of the meek in spirit—the humble, brief-lived, fleeting *Jehánára*, a follower of the disciples of holy *Cheest*—and daughter of the Emperor *Shah Jehán*,” *—*Cheest* or *Cheesti*, being the sect name of a devout man who was the guide, both spiritual and temporal, and the fast friend of the Emperor Akhbár (identical indeed with the Fucqueer in the Jogee anecdote—*vide* p. 101,) who consulted this holy individual on all occasions of difficulty, and by his advice founded

Ackbarábád or *Agra*—an universally esteemed man, whose memory was held in great reverence by the members of the Imperial family.⁹

Mr. Jeffrey next accompanied me to a reservoir lying at the bottom of a deep cavern, formed four-square, and locked within the high walls of the curious old buildings overhanging it. The spot is

⁹ Owing to similarity of sound and construction, this surname Cheest, was too hastily conceived (by, I think, Mrs. Colin Mackenzie in her work on India,) to be meant for *Christ*, and a theory built thereon that it indicated the conversion to Christianity of the deceased Princess. But *Shah Selim Cheesti*, the holy man above adverted to, although much imbued with a sense of religious tolerance, a principle well known to have been the example of his Royal Pupil, has not been handed down to us as at all a Christian missionary, much as his piety and the efficacy of his prayers, were relied upon by *Akhbár*, and fond as that great Emperor was of inquiries as to religious beliefs, and the Christian faith. The birth at length of a long-desired heir by the Empress, was the generally received result of the good man's "intercession" in the Sovereign's behalf in that regard, whom the gratified monarch, in devout recognition, and in honour of the Saint, named *Selim* after him. *Akhbár* was, however, disillusioned of this implied blessing, when *Selim* at a later period heartlessly rebelled against his father, before eventually succeeding him as the Emperor *Jehángir*. *Jehánára*, who was the great granddaughter of *Akhbár*, solicitously attended her visionless father, *Shah Jehán* (*Jehángir*'s son and successor,) on dethronement by his own cruel son the Emperor *Aurungzebe*, sharing his captivity, and who on his death was buried in the vault below the *Táj* by the side of his Queen *Noor Jehán*. The observant and accurate *Heber* said of her: "Another tomb which interested me very much was that of *Jehánára*, daughter of *Shah Jehán*. It has no size or importance, but she was one of the few amiable characters which the family of *Timour* can show. In the prime of youth and beauty, when her father was dethroned, imprisoned, and, I believe, blinded by his own wicked son *Aurungzebe*, she applied for leave to share his captivity, and continued to wait on him as a nurse and servant till the day of his death. Afterwards she was a bountiful benefactress to the poor and to religious men, and died with the reputation of a saint, better deserved than by many who have borne the name." (*Heber's Journal*, vol. ii. p. 298.)

The
Divers at
Delhi.

the habitation of a colony of *Moojāwirs* or musjid care-takers and sextons, the youths among whom stood gathered as we came up, ready stripped to plunge from every height and lofty pinnacle, down into the deep water below: that lay thus secreted among these places of the departed, a leap of quite seventy feet—and who indeed, performed the feat, one after another, in rapid succession. Some of these accustomed divers were lads of about ten, ranging up to twenty or twenty-five years of age. They all, however, leapt down either feet forward, or with their legs drawn up *frog-wise*, which gave them a ludicrous appearance in mid-air, but lengthening them as they reached the point of immersion; and some held their nostrils together; but not one of them took what we should call a *header*. They made no concealment of their expectation of “*Inām*” or recompense, but we considered the trifle we gave them to be *bucksish* or largess, rather than any *reward* for only exhibiting what they had been so long trained to do.

Treasure
Robbery

Received to-day an account of a treasure dacoitie committed a few nights ago down in Guzerat, by one of the Meena gangs, we suppose, who went down in that direction shortly ago, the details indicating that it was the work of Meenas, (*vide* pp. 393, 435). The plunder amounted to 16,400 rupees. This treasure had been sent on a bullock cart in charge of but the driver and one other person, for conveyance from *Ahmedabad*, where it had come up from *Bombay* by rail, to *Dholéra* in

the Guzerat Peninsula, a celebrated cotton-mart for the purchase of cotton. The convoy had pulled up for the night at a village called *Núnee Bóroo*. It was set upon at 10 o'clock that night by a band, it is reported, of fifteen men, "who, having beaten the cartman and the chowkeydár, drove away the cart and treasure for about a mile on the Dholéra road, and there transferred the plunder to their four camels and made off." A bundle of papers, supposed to have been dropped by them, was found at some distance away, and there the tracks indicated that ten persons had formed the party.¹

At a concert this evening, given by *Madame Bishop*, wife of Sir Julius Bishop, going the tour of India, and there I listened to the "Dashing White Sergeant" for the first time since I had heard it sung at home by *Madame Vestris*, more than thirty years ago. The assembly was held in the large hall of the new "Delhi Institute," a very fine room, but so lofty, that voice and accompaniment got mixed up by the reverberation, and could therefore be followed with difficulty.

16th April, *Hamilton Hotel, Delhi*.—Was engaged to-day in a disagreeable inquiry into a charge of

¹ P.S.—On a claim of *Khóji* declared to have been carried up to the Jodhpoor frontier, ten persons were sent down by the Jodhpoor Durbar to the British magistrate at Ahmedabad. They were, however, eventually released. None of them were *Meenas*. The case had all the characteristics of a dacoitie by *Meenas*, and the special department had for some time been expecting to hear of some exploit on their part in that direction. At a later period it was found that such was the fact—and some of the real gang came into our custody.

adultery with his wife (of known levity,) preferred by an approver against a duffedar. The duffedar was plainly to blame—the husband was in his custody, and the defendant had been seen in a closed room alone with the woman. I reduced him to nujjeeb for twelve months.

Dacoities
in
Bengal,

Dacoities would seem to be more prevalent than usual lately down towards *Houghly* in Bengal. It is assigned to the existing local scarcity, and the inquiry into it has been handed over to the special local detective department. They have *Mr. J. H. Reilly* down there, ready to hand to superintend it—the same intelligent Police officer who was specially employed in communication with myself, to put down Thug poisoners in Bengal, (*vide* pp. 38 and 42,) and who ably succeeded in doing so. That was a memorable occasion, and I must notice some of the remarkable cases the action revealed (*vide* Journal for 1865.)

And in
Tirhoot.

In Tirhoot too, down in Bengal, bordering on the Nipal frontier, there has lately been a succession of cases of dacoities committed upon houses by torchlight, which would seem to have been the deed of practised dacoits. One, of occurrence a week back, was at *Toolsee-Uhupra*, hour 3 a.m. A large band of robbers with lighted torches burst into the *Kóthi* or house, speared one of the inmates through the heart, wounded five others (one severely,) and made off with a booty of 630 rupees. Tirhoot is infested by *Dosádhs* and *Gurálas*, both criminal classes; but our own impression is, that some at least of these cases and the

dacoities in *Chumpárun* and other *Terai* districts on that frontier, may be ascribed to some new gang of *Budhuck* dacoits, that tribe still having habitation about there, who some years back were of formidable organization and gave my predecessor (Colonel Sir William Sleeman,) a deal of trouble. He submitted an exhaustive report upon their habits as professional dacoits. In Bengal the Budhucks are called *Keechucks*, "gipsies of up-country origin" (*vide* footnote, p. 386.)

END OF VOL. I

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